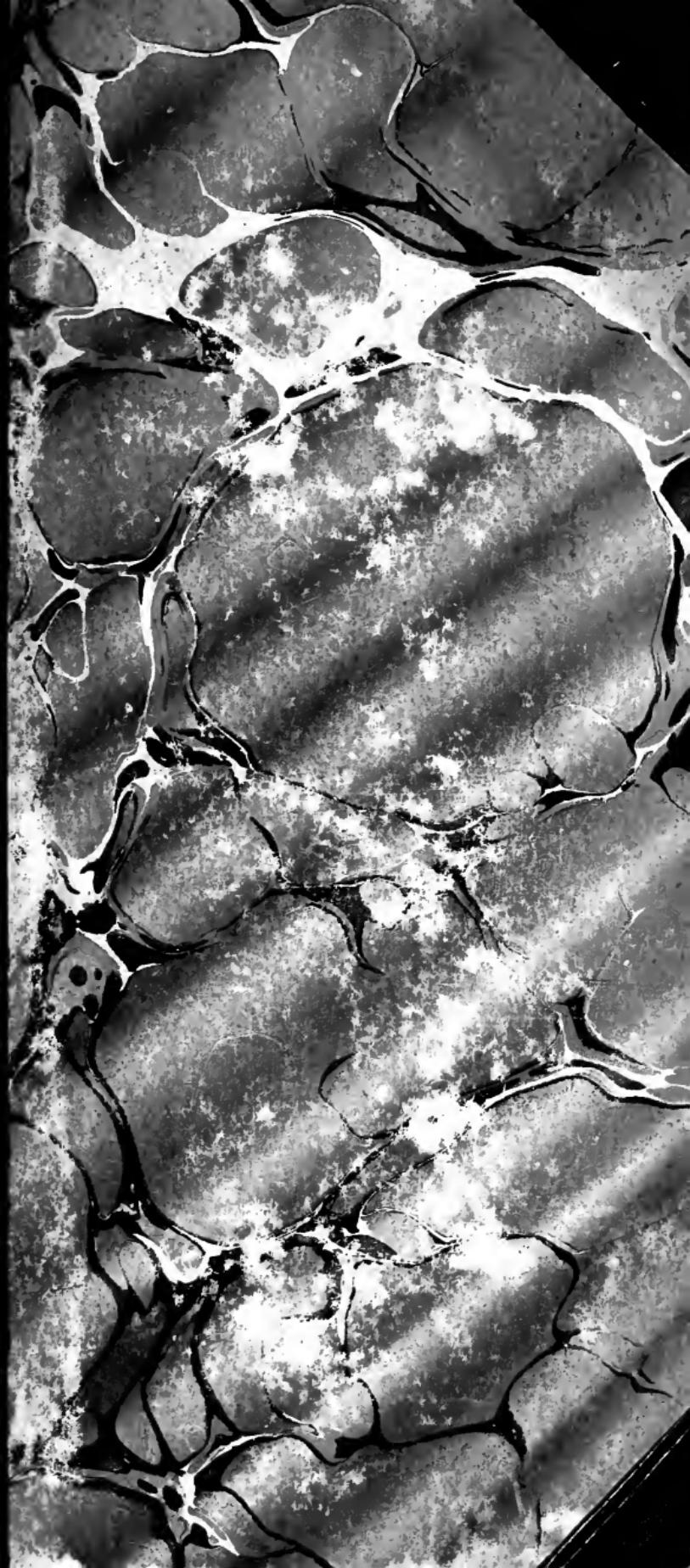
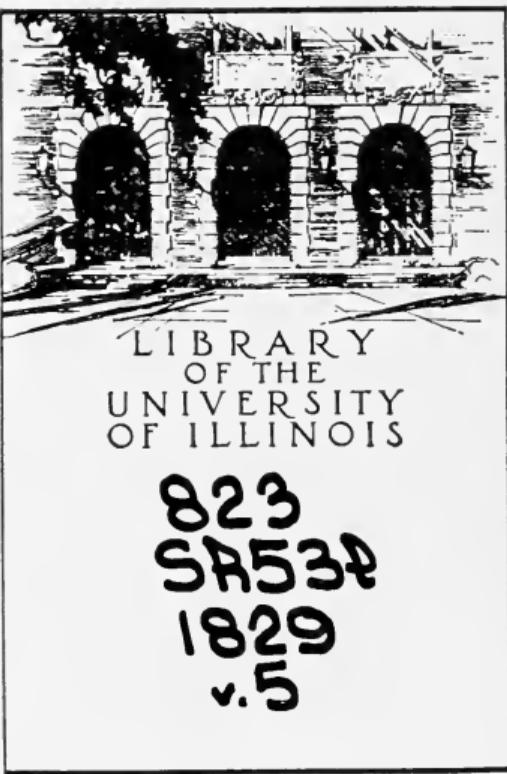
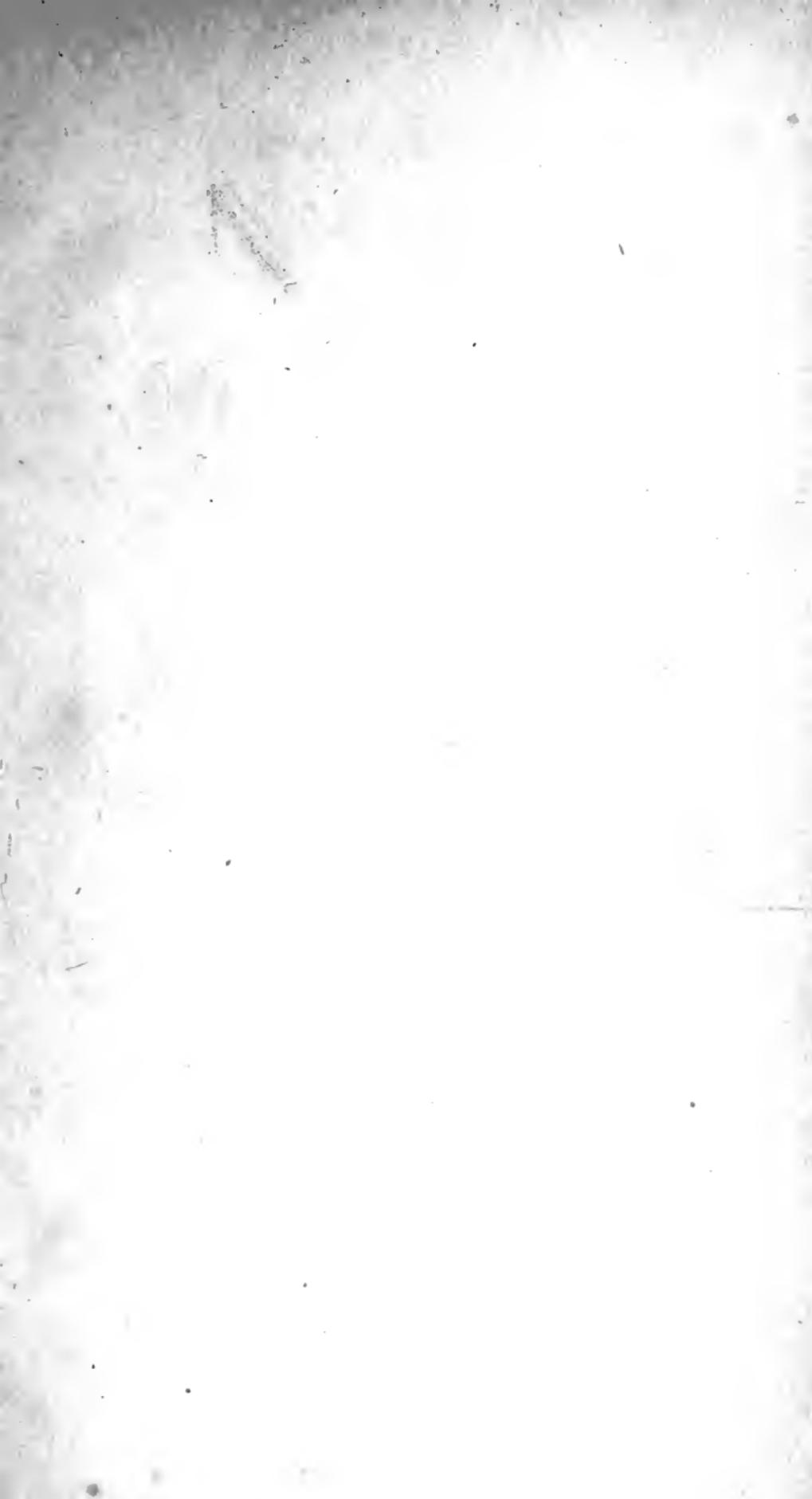


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FRONTS PIECE,



THE
Lady of the Manor.

BEING
A SERIES OF CONVERSATIONS
ON THE SUBJECT OF CONFIRMATION.
Intended for the Use of the Middle and Higher Ranks
OF
YOUNG FEMALES.

BY
MRS. SHERWOOD,
Author of "LITTLE HENRY AND HIS BEARER,"
&c. &c.

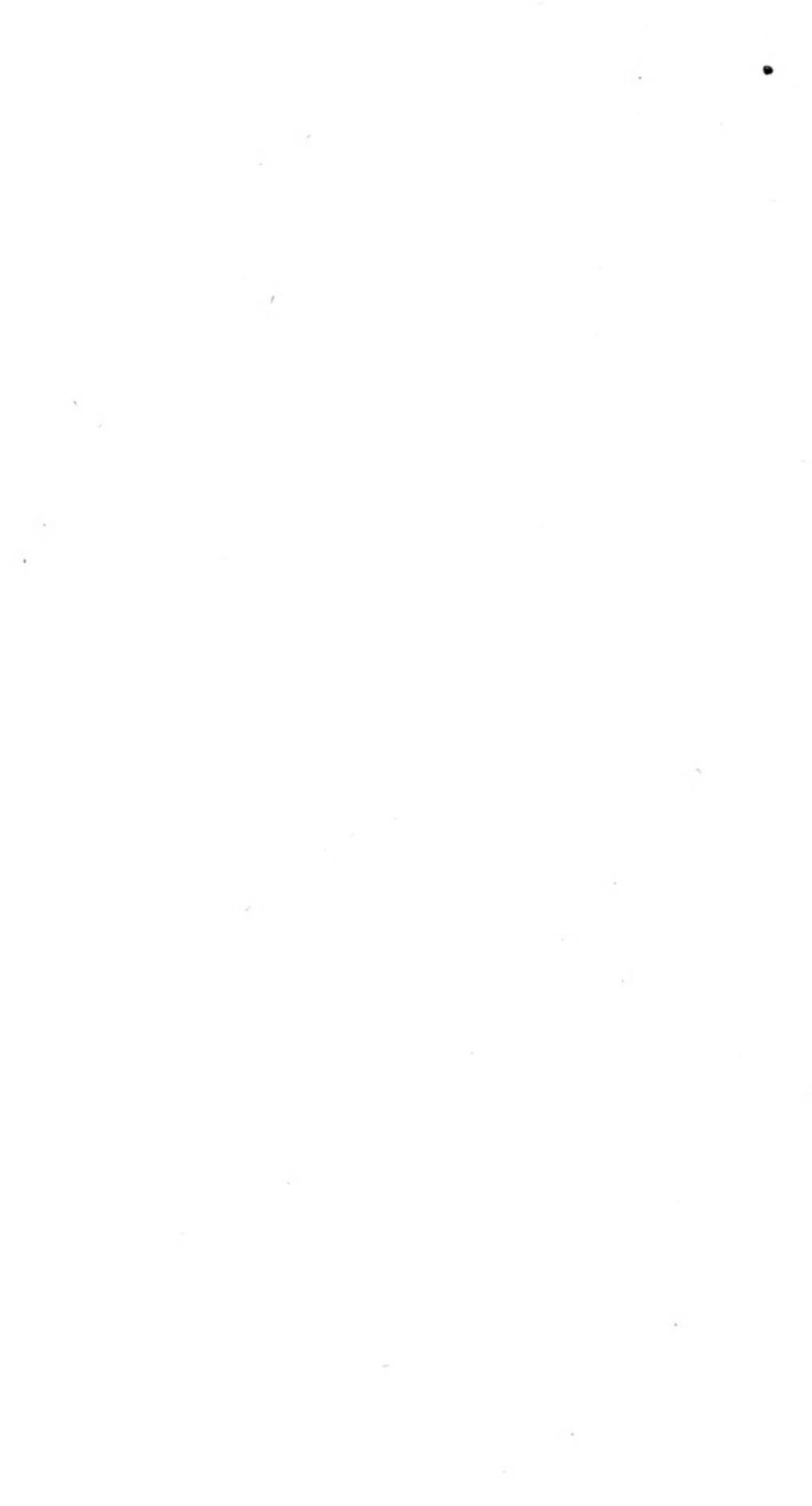
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THE

LADY OF THE MANOR,

§c.

CHAPTER XXII.

Tenth Commandment.—Thou shalt not covet thy Neighbour's House, thou shalt not covet thy Neighbour's Wife, nor his Servant, nor his Maid, nor his Ox, nor his Ass, nor any Thing that is his.

"AS the commandments have already engaged our attention for a considerable time," said the lady of the manor to her young people, on the evening chosen for the consideration of the tenth commandment, "I hope to close the subject this day with a narrative which I happen to have by me relative to the matter in hand. And, as most of what may be said on this subject is introduced in different parts of this story, I think it the less needful to make any remarks of my own on the question."

The lady of the manor then drew forth a small manuscript from her work-bag; and, when she had read the title, a smile immediately appeared on the countenances of the young people, several of whom remarked, that they could form no idea of what kind of narrative it would be which should answer to a title so extraordinary.

The lady of the manor smilingly signified, that she was ready to satisfy their curiosity in the best manner

imaginable--by reading the story, which she accordingly commenced without further delay.

Rich in the Kitchen, poor in the Parlour.

On the confines of Worcestershire and Herefordshire, in a neighbourhood rendered in winter almost inaccessible through the deep roads of stiff red clay, is an ancient mansion called Stanbrook Court.

This building, which was from time immemorial the seat of a respectable family of the name of Vaughen, had been erected in the reign of William and Mary, and partook of that style of architecture which was fashionable in that period. The old gentleman who had entered into possession of the estate about the middle of the last century, had, at his death, left six children, with all of whom we shall become acquainted in the course of our narrative, although the affairs of one only will engage our particular attention.

Of these children, the eldest, a son, had been educated at home, and had spent the greater part of his youth in his father's stable and dog-kennel. At the period from which our narrative commences, he was more than fifty years of age, had been a widower some years, and had two sons, and as many daughters. He was generally denominated, in the country, Squire Vaughen, of Stanbrook Court, and was said to possess the best pack of fox-hounds in the county.

Two maiden sisters, viz. Mrs. Dorothea and Mrs. Penelope, who were nearest in age to the Squire, kept his house, which honourable station they had held ever since the death of his wife: and though they were neither of them remarkable for their good temper, yet, as their fortunes were small, and as they enjoyed in their brother's house some conveniences which they could not expect to find elsewhere, they contrived to accommodate themselves so far to his humours, that, during the course of their long residence with him, he had never actually told them to leave his house, although he not unfrequently had dropped hints which they might have interpreted to this purpose, had it suited their convenience so to do.

These ladies had all that pride and ignorance of the

world which is frequently found among persons who live in retirement and among their inferiors, and they were not without a variety of notable notions concerning that which they deemed proper and becoming in persons in a certain rank of life.

Their nieces, the Squire's daughters, whose education had been begun by their aunts, and finished at an ordinary but dashing boarding-school in a neighbouring town, were not different from the common run of young people who have been carelessly educated, and who mistake a certain air of easy confidence for gentility, excepting that they were infected with that kind of family pride and hauteur of manner which is now seldom exhibited in the world, and which would not be tolerated were such display attempted.

The second son of the old family of which the Squire was the elder, had been entered into the navy at an early age, and from that period had rarely visited his native place. This gentleman was always distinguished, when spoken of in the family, by the appellation of the Captain; and, as he was in the East India service at the time of which I am speaking, it was hoped that he would return home with some lacs of rupees, and, also, that he would then think himself either too old or too infirm to marry; as it is generally believed that those who go abroad live three years while their more quiet friends in England have added only twenty-four months to their lives.

The fifth child of this family was a daughter, who, having entered this world some years after her sisters, and being endowed with rather more beauty than her seniors, had been put forward to make her fortune by marriage. This lady had been seen by a young counsellor at an assize-ball at Hereford, and had been taken by him to London, where she had resided ever since, taking care to spend her husband's money as expeditiously as he obtained it, having acquired a vehement desire for the vanities and pomps of this world.

The youngest individual of this household was a son, who, having been early taken from his father's family, and weaned from the inelegant habits which there prevailed, by a pious uncle, who adopted and educated him, he, through the divine blessing, became a character as

eminently amiable as many of the other individuals of his family were forbidding. The Church had been the destination of this gentleman; and a family-living of a clear three hundred a year, together with a comfortable old house, had been deemed a handsome provision for him, being all that he obtained from his father, and which was far more, as his sisters often said, than they ever received, the aim of the family always having been to advance the eldest son at the expence of all the other children.

This last mentioned gentleman, whom we shall call Henry Vaughen, had in his youth possessed a very handsome person and a pleasing countenance; and being, as we have reason to think, a sincere Christian, it was impossible that he should retain any part of that pride which characterized the rest of the family. There was, however, one thing deserving of notice in the character of this gentleman—that at the same time that he seemed to be entirely without ambition or desire after the pomps and vanities of this world, he carefully cultivated and diligently sought, both for himself and his family, all its real elegances: not, indeed, those elegances which the milliner and goldsmith might supply; but those decorations of life which are for the most part equally within the reach of the poor and the rich, and which are frequently bestowed on those who love the Lord without money and without price.

Among these, he enumerated all the graces of manner and of carriage, neatness of dress, the courtesies of speech, the interchange of elegant ideas, and the display of holy and amiable feelings. To these, he added a taste for literature, and an awakened perception of the beauties of nature: such as the glorious views of the rising and setting sun; and of the moon, travelling in her full-orbed splendour through the fleckered clouds, or moving, as a silver crescent, over the ebon brow of night; of distant mountains, or solemn groves; of waterfalls, sparkling in the shadowy glade; and of flocks and herds feeding in the peaceful lawn; and of those more minute and delicate beauties which, being created by infinite power, exist among the inferior tribes of animated creatures, or lie hid within the cups and bells of the little flowers of the forest.

Such objects as these were ever pleasing to this excellent man, and excited within him feelings of love and gratitude to the bountiful Giver of all good; and it was his constant aim, while he endeavoured to inspire the minds of those about him with the admiration of these purer objects of taste, to lead them from the love of those things which have in themselves no actual excellence, and which are desired only because the passing fashions of the day may have given them a momentary importance, or because they have derived a more lasting weight from the envy, the ambition, and the covetousness of human nature.

Mr. Henry Vaughen cultivated this simple taste in himself and his family not merely from caprice, but with a religious view, in order that the pride of life and its empty distinctions might have the less influence over his and their minds, that they might have the full enjoyment of all the innocent delights within their reach, and might the more cheerfully acquiesce in the want of those pleasures and possessions which the Almighty thought fit to withhold: and so firmly were his own principles settled, with regard to these subjects, that, from the time he entered on his ministry, he was enabled to reject at once and decidedly every temptation which owed its allurements to any of the false notions of pride and vanity, by which thousands in this Christian country are entirely influenced, and by which many persons professing themselves to be set apart from the world are, nevertheless, affected to a degree of which they have little idea.

At the age of twenty-four, Mr. Henry Vaughen took possession of the family-living before mentioned. It was situated in a village about six miles from his brother's seat, and though it lay quite as deep in the clay as Stanbrook Court, it was, in reality, less recluse, owing to the residence of two great families at different ends of the parish, both of which attended the parish church. The first of these families was that of Sir Thomas Freeman, an ancient and respectable baronet; and the second that of Mr. Smith, a country gentleman, of no high connexions, indeed, but extremely rich.

Immediately after his induction into this living, Mr. Henry Vaughen married a young lady, to whom he had

been long attached. This lady had a lovely exterior; she was pious, humble, and capable of relishing all the exalted and refined ideas of her husband; but her character by no means possessed the strength and firmness of his: and though, when supported by him, she was capable of every exertion necessary in her situation, yet, when deprived of that support, she shrunk into comparative inaction and timidity.

Now, in order to make my story plain to the comprehension of my reader, it is necessary that I should enter into a more minute description of the parsonage-house to which Mr. Henry Vaughen brought his bride than may at first appear altogether requisite: as, however, I shall employ no more detail than the subject requires, I hope that this minuteness will be pardoned.

The parsonage belonging to the family-living bestowed on Mr. Vaughen as soon as he was admitted into priest's orders, stood in a large square garden inclosed by an old wall, at the two corners of which towards the front were two square summer-houses. The garden itself was laid out with much old-fashioned stiffness, but filled, at the same time, with every kind of fruit and vegetable in rich and vast abundance. From the house to the front gate which opened into the village street was a straight gravel walk, wide enough to admit a carriage, and on each side were shrubs and flowers; this being the only part of the garden devoted to the purpose of ornament. The house itself was of brick, neatly plastered, and presenting in front two gable ends, whose large projecting windows were of small casements in framework of stone. These gable ends were united to each other by a line of flat roofing, which formed the centre of the house.

The entrance into the house was in this central part, through a hall, which opened on one side into a large old but handsome parlour, and, on the other, into a kitchen of equal size with the parlour, and which, if divested of the degrading considerations usually associated with the thought of a kitchen, might have been deemed an extremely agreeable apartment, having its projecting window towards the garden. Beyond the kitchen was a second apartment for the convenience of servants, in which the more coarse and ordinary offices of housewifery were usually performed. Beyond the entrance-hall was

a large light closet, which had been used in ancient days as a store-room; but, as it contained a small fire-place, and had a glass door opening into the garden, small as this room was, Mr. Henry Vaughen instantly seized upon it as an apartment for study: and though, when he had put up his book-shelves, it scarcely contained space for a table and two chairs, yet, as it commanded a view of the spire of the village church peeping over the trees of the garden, he declared that he would not change it for the finest library in the royal palace. The upper apartments of this house were not much more numerous than the lower ones; but, as Mr. Vaughen often remarked, they were quite sufficient for a man of four hundred a year, which was the utmost extent of his income, even after he had come into possession of his wife's fortune, which did not happen till at the period of her father's death, about two years after her marriage.

It was in the year 1776 that Mr. Vaughen became a householder. At that period, three hundred a year was nearly as much as twice that sum is in these days; and he was enabled, in consequence, to keep two female servants, and a man-servant in a plain livery.

As the value of money became less, the man was dismissed, and a labourer was occasionally employed to keep the garden in order, for Mr. Vaughen was a lover of neatness; and, as the times continued to press, the worthy minister took into his family a little boy, the son of a counsellor in London, to educate with his own son, by this means supplying the deficiency of his income without impoverishing the little fund which he had always put by for charity, and on which he would never allow himself to encroach.

In the mean time, Mr. and Mrs. Vaughen were blessed with several lovely children. The eldest, a daughter, whom he named Henrietta, was, like her parents, exceedingly amiable in her person, and possessing a gravity and serenity of deportment which originated in a calm and happy state of mind. This disposition was partly natural, but owed its stability to the divine blessing upon the judicious management of her parents. Two lovely infants, a boy and girl, who were next in age to Henrietta, had been recalled by their heavenly Father a few months after their births; and these trials, so bitter to a

parent's heart, had been made particularly useful to Mr. and Mrs. Vaughen, in loosening their affections from the present scene, and impressing them with a sense of the shortness of this life, the uncertainty and deceitfulness of all earthly things, and the necessity of preparing for that change which, sooner or later, all men must undergo.

Not long after the death of the last of these beloved infants, their places were supplied to their afflicted parents by a son and daughter, born one year after the other, to whom they gave the names of their little departed ones, to wit, Adolphus and Emmeline; and in the smiles of these sweet children, they lost much of the bitterness of their sorrow.

The pupil whom Mr. Vaughen received into his house, and educated with his own children, was called Theodore Owen; and, as he was an amiable boy, and seldom went home, his parents having other and elder sons with whom they seemed principally occupied, his tutor was enabled to direct his education as entirely to his own liking as that of his own children.

During the minority of their children, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Vaughen enjoyed as much happiness as ever falls to the lot of human beings, and this happiness was, undoubtedly, owing, in a great measure, to the simplicity of their views and motives of conduct. For, having little of the fear of man, or the thirst of human praise, or the covetous desires of the flesh, on behalf either of themselves or their children, they were set free from many cares, troubles, and perplexities, which continually enter into the families of ordinary men, and disturb their repose. But, as I have before said, Mr. Vaughen was raised above these feelings in an especial manner, and had been enabled, by the divine blessing, to inspire his wife with his own sentiments.

We must here, however, pause a moment, to point out what that is by which a man is enabled to overcome the world, and to break the seven green withies by which the world binds its votaries, and leads them in its triumphant march even up to the gates of hell, from which, if some are saved, it is even as brands plucked out of the fire.

There are certain religious truths which cannot be too often repeated, or brought in too many views before the

mind of man; and that discourse or serious narrative is defective, and should by every pious person be so regarded, which fails to express those important statements of facts by the knowledge and influence of which the whole tenor of our lives ought to be directed. That God created man in a state of innocence, is one of these important facts; but that, long before his creation, He who knew all things from eternity foresaw that he would fall, and therefore graciously provided for his restoration, is another of equal, and perhaps higher importance. The operations also of the three Persons of the blessed and glorious Trinity in the work of man's salvation, are facts of which we ought never to lose sight, lest, when we discover any thing which is good and desirable in the saints of the Lord, we should fail to give the glory to him, by whom the vile nature of man is changed, and by whom he is enabled to bring forth the fruits of holiness.

Now we are taught that the change of the heart is the especial work of God the Spirit. It is the Lord the Spirit who convinceth man of sin, bringeth him to a knowledge of Christ, and enableth him to overcome the world. It is the Lord the Spirit who cleanseth the hearts of the chosen ones from the covetous desires of the flesh, and gives them that spirit of contentment by which they receive with thankfulness those good things which the Lord bestows, and submit with cheerfulness when the same good things are withheld. It was the Lord the Spirit who enabled the apostle Paul to say, "*I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where, and in all things, I am instructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*" (Phil. iv. 11—13.)

It was, therefore, through the power and influence of the Holy Spirit of God that Mr. and Mrs. Vaughen were enabled to attain this state of mind so full of contentment, through which their hearts were restrained from indulging in vain and covetous desires after that which they did not possess: neither was Mr. Vaughen so ill instructed in heavenly things as to limit the idea of covetousness, as many persons do, to the eager desire of obtaining or

amassing money or other earthly possessions; but he received the command which says, "Thou shalt not covet," in a sense far more extended than that in which it is ordinarily understood. And if ever he detected himself in indulging a wish for that which was not within his reach, he instantly condemned himself as having broken the injunction of Scripture, which saith, *Let your conversation be without covetousness.* (Heb. xiii. 5.) And not only did this pious man never allow himself to utter any desire for that which he did not possess; but he also regarded it as a Christian duty to feel and profess the utmost thankfulness for that which he had; insomuch so, that he seldom sat down to a meal with his family, inhaled the odour of flowers, beheld a pleasant prospect, enjoyed the conversation of a friend, or received the caresses of his children, without exhibiting such symptoms of joy and gratitude as could not fail to shed an enlivening influence on those around him. The breakings out of sin in those with whom he had connexion, and the strugglings of iniquity in his own heart, were the occasions which alone seemed to have power to oppress him for any length of time; and thus it happened that his family was cheered by a peculiar sunshine of which few others are allowed to partake.

It has often been observed how strongly children are affected by the cursory remarks dropped in hours of relaxation by their parents, and how (humanly speaking) their characters are formed and indelibly impressed by these words thrown out, as it were, at haphazard by their instructors.

How few professors of religion are habitually consistent in their conversation! how few appear to be in any degree raised above the world! What female, for example, do we see, who, when the subject of dress is brought forward, does not betray an earnestness which must convey to her nieces and daughters, if she happen to have any, a secret assurance that she attributes a certain importance to these things beyond what Scripture authorizes? And what man, when speaking of worldly fame and honour, or of the esteem in which he is himself held in society, does not betray a warmth that contradicts every assertion which he may make, or may have made, concerning his deadness to these things?

Young people are keen observers, and soon learn to distinguish the language of form from that of real feeling: they too often perceive that the one is used by their instructors when religion is spoken of, and the other when worldly matters are discussed; and the impression from these observations becomes as strong as it often proves ruinous.

This being the case, how important it is that parents should carefully regulate their most inward feelings, that they should apply to the Holy Spirit to cleanse their hearts from all earthly passions, and that they should endeavour to conform their will and affections to the word of God!—But to return to my story.

The education of the children brought up under the charge of Mr. and Mrs. Vaughen, was so well conducted, and so particularly blessed, that, while they constituted the happiness of their parents, they were admired and loved by all who saw them. At the age of twenty, Henrietta was one of the most lovely young women in the country. Her general deportment still retained the composure and gravity that I have before mentioned; but she had withal a great softness and sweetness of manner, by which she secured both the respect and love of all who beheld her. It was impossible for her to have enjoyed the instructions of her father for so many years without possessing an intelligent mind. Her views of religion were so simple and clear, that it would have been impracticable for her to stray from the paths of rectitude without being immediately sensible of it; and though she knew but little of the prevailing fashions of the day, her manners were nevertheless formed on such a broad basis of truth and knowledge of human nature, that she was fit for any society. We do not mean to attribute this perfection of manners to the exertions of the young lady herself, but to the care of her father, who always maintained that simple habits, such as he loved, and such as he believed his God approved, would never appear to greater advantage than when they were united with elegant manners, and that he therefore considered it as an especial duty of the advocates of Christian simplicity to insist upon the necessity of a courteous and elegant carriage.

Emmeline, who was in her seventeenth year when her

sister was in her twenty-first, was of a less sedate character than Henrietta, yet scarcely less lovely in her way. Her countenance was so strikingly charming, that it was difficult for any one to pass her without turning again to look after her; and yet it was impossible to say what it was in her which particularly pleased. Her feelings were not under the same control with those of her sister; and yet she never fell into those excesses which might have been expected from a young person whose whole soul sometimes beamed with joy in her dark blue eyes, or expressed itself in bitter sorrow, on slight occasions, on her coral lips and mantling cheek. But this young creature cherished, by the divine blessing, a lively sense of her duty to God; for we dare not impiously attribute this best of heavenly gifts, a sense of religion, to any human work; no, not to the best directed efforts even of the most judicious parent: for it is God the Spirit who alone can change and soften the heart of man; and to him henceforward and for ever be the glory, and all the glory, given by every pious instructor, when the slightest symptom of grace appears in the wayward minds of any of the youthful sons of Adam.

Adolphus was a fine youth, and not less so his friend Theodore; and though neither of these were without faults, yet it was to be hoped, from many excellent traits in their characters, that the Almighty had begun his work of love in their hearts.

These young people resided together under the paternal roof of Adolphus, till it was thought necessary for them, as he was now nineteen years of age, to go to the University: and as Mr. Vaughen had a friend who was a tutor in Trinity College, Cambridge, of a decidedly pious character, it was thought advisable, the young men being both intended for the Church, that they should be placed under his superintendance in the college just mentioned, although the expence was such as Mr. Vaughen hardly knew how to meet for his own son. As, however, those who had the charge of Theodore's education approved the plan, and as the young men expressed great uneasiness at the idea of being separated, Mr. Vaughen resolved to make an effort to provide for the cost, and accordingly went over to Cambridge, and placed the young people under the charge of his friend.

I shall not describe the silent sorrow of Henrietta on this occasion of her separation from her brother and his companion, which last she loved little less than she loved her brother; nor shall I enter into a minute description of the many tears shed on the same occasion by Emmeline; but proceed to say, that Mr. Vaughen now, for the first time in his life, began to experience anxiety about money, a species of solicitude which he had taken care never to feel before.

During the first year of his son's residence at Cambridge, a legacy of one hundred pounds, left by a distant relation, had set all things right, and enabled him, when Adolphus returned to spend the Christmas vacation, to pay, as far as he knew, every shilling that he owed in the world—a circumstance for which he was very thankful. The experience of this year, however, had taught him that his present annual expences exceeded his income by at least one hundred pounds; and he, consequently, foresaw, that, unless some exertion was made, he should, during his son's residence in Cambridge, involve himself in difficulties from which he might never be extricated during the rest of his life.

Mr. Vaughen was not a man who needlessly troubled his family with his perplexities; he therefore resolved not to express his anxiety, till he could at the same time propose some means for its relief.

In the interim, however, he made his difficulties a matter of special mention in prayer, and carried all his troubles to the throne of grace; determining to follow up whatever ideas should suggest themselves, after his application to his heavenly Friend and never-failing Comforter.

The first idea that occurred to him was that of taking another pupil; but, after some time, as no pupil offered, he abandoned this project, and waited a short time to see what might offer itself for his relief. But although his mind was oppressed, it was not overwhelmed; for he reposed his confidence upon the Rock of Ages, and he felt a full assurance that this his light affliction would work for his good, and for that of all whom he loved.

About this time, while his mind was in this state of expectation, (for we cannot call it doubt,) an old lady, the daughter of his predecessor, arrived in the village,

professing that it was her wish to terminate her days in the peaceful retirement in which she had passed her youth, and then to be buried beside the remains of her parents.

Mrs. Vaughen called on her as soon as she heard of her arrival, and found her in mean lodgings, although they were the best which the village afforded. The result of this visit was an invitation, which the old lady accepted, to dine at the parsonage; and, consequently, she arrived the next day, accompanied by a cousin in destitute circumstances, a meek and dependent creature, who sustained the twofold situation of companion and waiting-maid.

When Mrs. Alice Turner (the old lady alluded to) was received in the parlour of the rectory, she seemed at first much affected, and afterwards delighted; and more than once, during the day, did she express the delight that it would afford her, could she but be permitted to finish her days in those apartments in which she had spent the earliest periods of her life.

This remark, which appeared natural enough, passed without notice by Mrs. Vaughen, though not unobserved by her husband, to whom this idea occurred—Could we by any means spare this lady this room, and the bed-chamber above, what she would pay us would supply, in a great measure, the deficiency of our income: but we have no second parlour; and could I ask my wife, who is the daughter of a gentleman, to live in a kitchen? But although this idea presented itself in a form so dubious, and apparently attended with so many difficulties, yet Mr. Vaughen would not and could not divest his mind of its influence; and so entirely did it occupy him during the whole of the next day, that his wife and daughters more than once asked him the subject of his thoughts. At length, the thought became so importunate, that he resolved to open his mind to his eldest daughter, and to ask her opinion on the subject, and whether she conceived that the proposal would be altogether intolerable to her mother.

With this view, on the following afternoon, he asked Henrietta to accompany him in a walk; and when they were at some little distance from the house, he stated to her, first, his pecuniary difficulties, which statement

seemed considerably to affect her; and then mentioned his plan for their relief, by which he as suddenly, and much to his surprise, seemed to remove her distress.

Seeing, however, the unruffled calmness with which she received the proposition of giving up their only parlour for another's use, he began to fear that this calmness arose from a want of consideration, and therefore said, "But, Henrietta, my dear, you do not consider that we have only one parlour?"

"Yes, I do, papa," she answered; "I know we have but one parlour."

"And when we give up our parlour, we must sit in the kitchen."

"And we cannot have a pleasanter room, papa," said the young lady.

"But the servants, my dear, you must sit with them."

"O, but, papa," replied she, "I think we should not require two servants then: we could part with our under servant; mamma does not much like her: and I am sure that none of us could have any objection to sitting in the room with nurse."

It happened that the head servant in Mr. Vaughn's family had formerly lived at Stanbrook Court in the capacity of housemaid, and had known Mr. Henry Vaughn when he was a child, she being about ten years older than himself. She had afterwards lived as upper servant at the parsonage, and had nursed every child in the family. She was, therefore, considered more as a humble friend than a servant, by all in the house. This circumstance was much in favour of Mr. Vaughn's plan, though he had not thought of it when the idea of the proposed domestic alteration first entered his mind. "And do you think, my dear," he said, "if we take our meals in the kitchen, that you could do with one servant?"

"Certainly," said Henrietta, "in that case we should prefer it; particularly as I and my sister would, of course, make a point of doing what we could in the house to assist nurse."

"Well, but Henrietta, my dear," said her father, "what shall we do with our visitors? You know, I cannot receive more than one person in my study."

"Why, papa," said Henrietta, smiling, "we will tell

all our friends and acquaintances our situation, and why we have found it necessary to let our apartment; and those who still choose to visit us notwithstanding—our poverty, I was going to say; but that word will not do, for we shall not be poor then—our degradation: shall I use that word, papa? No, that won't do; for we shall not be disgraced, though living in our kitchen—our descent—I think that word will do," added she, smiling; "those who choose to visit us, notwithstanding our descent, we will bring into our neat kitchen; and those who do not like us in our new station will, it is to be hoped, stay away: so that difficulty, dear papa, will soon be settled."

"My dear, artless Henrietta, shall I tell you," said her father, "that there will be a third description of persons among our acquaintances?—I mean those who will neither come to see us in our kitchen because they love us, nor stay away because they dislike us; but, taking a middle course, and perhaps cherishing mixed feelings with regard to us, will come to look at us, to find fault with us, to hear what we have to say, and perhaps to ridicule us. Now these are the kind of characters whom the prince of this world frequently makes use of to forward his vilest purposes; and through the intervention of these instruments, which often apparently seem weak and ineffectual, he continually opposes the cause of good and effectually promotes that of evil: by means of these mixed characters he acts upon those who would otherwise sooner suspect him, and through these he makes the worse appear the better cause.

"Now, even though I should prevail with your dear mother to concur in my plan, and I think, judging of the future from the past, I shall meet with but little difficulty in doing so, yet I feel afraid that she will suffer much from the impertinent interference of this description of neighbours, and from connexions whose regard she has hitherto desired to conciliate; and though she would, I am persuaded, never be induced by such to repent of what she may have done for her family, still her tender spirit may be wounded, and her peace destroyed; and although, on occasions of this kind, I will always come to her aid when I can, yet, as my parish duties not unfrequently call me from home, I must look to you for much

assistance in this respect. Considering your age, my child, you have much composure of manner and self-command; and if you will undertake, in case of my absence, to receive such visitors as may happen to come, explain to them the motives of my conduct, receive them, if needs be, in our new apartment, and shield your mother from all unpleasant encounters of this sort, you will inexpressibly oblige your father, and relieve your mother."

"O, papa, papa!" said Henrietta, "you have used the word oblige! O, how can a child oblige a parent, when, after all which can be done in the longest life, the weight of obligation must ever remain on the side of the child?"

The father's blessing upon his beloved daughter followed this remark; and the young lady, being free from care concerning what had passed, immediately introduced a new subject, and told her father that she and her sister had long been considering about the means of establishing a Sunday-school in the parish. "And now, papa," she said, "if, by letting our best apartments, and parting with our servant, we obtain a little more than the money we absolutely require, perhaps we shall be able to accomplish this desirable object."

The father entered into his daughter's scheme with an interest and delight which so entirely pervaded his mind, that no person would have supposed what had been the nature of the subject which occupied their attention during the former part of their walk.

The appearance of a livery-servant, lounging at the door of the village inn, as they returned through the rural street, was the first thing, on their approach towards home, which drew their attention from the scheme of the Sunday-school. As they passed by the inn, the servant came up to them, and informed them that his master, Sir Thomas Freeman, (who was a young man, just come into possession of his estates and honours,) was at the rectory with Mrs. Vaughen.

Mr. Vaughen hastened home, and found his wife making tea for the baronet, who was apparently engaged in some very interesting conversation with Emmeline. Mr. Vaughen looked rather disconcerted at this appearance of assiduity on the part of the young gentleman, espe-

cially as, more than once before, the father had observed symptoms of the same kind in his behaviour towards his younger daughter. He, however, took no apparent notice of the circumstance, but, accosting his youthful visiter politely, contrived to engaged him in a conversation by which he was prevented from directing any further particular address to his daughter.

In the mean time, Henrietta relieved her mother of the business of tea-making, and Emmeline sat considering what Sir Thomas had been saying to her, but could not recollect any thing particularly, except that he had compared her cheeks to roses and her eyes to stars; and added, that if carried to court, she would eclipse all the beauties there. Now whether she believed what he had told her or not does not appear, but it was evident that she was far from being displeased by the pains which the baronet had taken to please her; and by this emotion of pleasure she was but ill disposed for the trial which awaited her in a few hours.

On the day following that on which Mr. Vaughen's conversation with Henrietta and the visit of Sir Thomas took place, while this affectionate husband was sitting in his study considering in what way he could best open the matter under consideration to his wife, Mrs. Vaughen came into the room to tell him that she was about to dismiss her under servant, having discovered some faults in her conduct which could not be overlooked.

Mr. Vaughen instantly considered this an opportunity so favourable for the opening of his mind to his wife, that he ought not to let it slip, and he accordingly entered with her into a full explanation of their difficulties, and of the plans that he had formed for overcoming them.

On this occasion, the superior knowledge which Mrs. Vaughen had of the world prevented her from receiving the intelligence respecting their circumstances with the same calmness with which her daughter had heard it. In the plans proposed she looked forward to a long train of difficulties, vexations, and mortifications, which Henrietta had not foreseen; and so entirely was she overcome by the prospect, that, bursting into tears, she said to her husband, "And is there no other possible means of extricating ourselves from these difficulties than that extremely disagreeable expedient which you propose?"

"Point any out, my dear," said Mr. Vaughen, calmly, "and I am ready to adopt them."

"Another pupil, my dear," said Mrs. Vaughen.

"I cannot get one," replied her husband.

"Rigid and minute economy," replied Mrs. Vaughen.

"On our present plan of living, no economy would answer the purpose," answered Mr. Vaughen; "and, if it would, such excessive parsimony would be, my dear, a state of suffering, which I could ill bear: and, as far as I am concerned, I would, I assure you, infinitely rather be *rich in the kitchen than poor in the parlour*."

"But our friends, Mr. Vaughen," said she, "our friends, what will they say?"

"Why, our friends will approve of what we do, when they know our motives."

"What! will you plead poverty to your friends, Mr. Vaughen?" said she.

"No, my dear, certainly not," he answered, "because I shall have no poverty to plead: we shall be *rich in the kitchen*."

"But you will lay open your affairs to them?" said she.

"Yes," he replied, "to them and to every one whom it may concern."

She was silent for a moment, for she loved her husband, and had been accustomed to reverence all that he said and did; but he had now taken a flight higher than she could soar, and her eyes became dazzled and her sight confused in looking after him.

"Well, my dear," he said, availing himself of this pause, and kindly taking her hand, "am I to understand that I have your consent? Shall I put on my hat, and call on Mrs. Alice Turner, and make our bargain with her? She is a woman of fortune: we shall be sure of receiving what she undertakes to pay us."

Mrs. Vaughen grasped the hand which was placed in hers; and, looking tenderly at her husband, "For myself, my Henry," she said, "for myself, I do not care where I live, or what I do; but for my daughters, my dear daughters, I do feel. Let us consider again, before we take a measure by which we remove them out of the rank of life in which they were born, into one from which they can never rise again." Here a fresh burst of tears

interrupted her further utterance, and she sank upon her husband's bosom, as if quite overcome by her feelings.

Mr. Vaughen seemed hurt by this conduct, but reproved her gently; and when she had recovered some degree of composure, he thus addressed her. "How is this, my dear Jane," he said, "that you, a pious woman, as you surely are, should give way to weaknesses of which even a wise woman of the world might be ashamed? And why," enquired he, "in the first place, do you give yourself airs of heroism and of martyrdom, as it were, on an occasion which in nowise justifies it? The sacrifices which are now required of you are so small, that they exist, in fact, only in imagination; and though you profess that this world is not your home or resting-place, and that you desire a better country, even a heavenly one, yet, when you are requested to move from one side of your house to the other, and to consent to be waited upon by your daughters rather than by an hireling, you assume to yourself the high carriage of one who, being called to undergo some vast suffering, is willing to make a merit of it in the eyes of those who inflict these torments. But this," added he, "is one of the reigning foibles of the day, and is the effect of those modish and effeminate principles which often prevail in highly polished society. Every daughter, sister, and wife, who has not every whim indulged to the utmost, is a victim and martyr in her own house; and, rather than not appear so to the world, many of these self-tormentors will represent their nearest connexions as the worst and most unreasonable of tyrants."

"My dear, my dear," said poor Mrs. Vaughen, "you are harsh, indeed you are harsh. When did I speak of myself as of an unhappy wife, or of you as a cruel tyrant?" Thus saying, she held out her hand, as if imploring her husband's forgiveness, saying, "You shall direct me, my love, as you always have done; in this and every action of my life you shall be my guide; and if I continue to enjoy your love, I shall soon forget whether my habitation is a kitchen or a parlour."

"Be happy, my love," said he, "be happy, and then there will be an end of all our difficulties."

"One thing only, my dear, will I ask you," said she, recovering her cheerfulness, "one thing only: satisfy me

upon this one subject, and I shall then be easy.—Does it not appear to you, that, by the measure we are about to take, we may injure the prospects of our children? Our girls are handsome; Emmeline is thought particularly attractive; and I have more than once observed that Sir Thomas has paid her great attention. Her family is good, of high respectability in the country; and though she has lived in retirement, yet she has manners and a figure, as I heard Sir Thomas himself say, which might grace a court. So far Sir Thomas would not lower himself by choosing her; but after she is once become an inhabitant of a kitchen, and is known to occupy herself in servile works, the case would, of course, be quite altered, and it could then never be expected that a man in Sir Thomas's situation should ever think of her."

As Mr. Vaughen felt that he had betrayed undue warmth in the former part of his argument, he now restrained himself, though vehemently urged to speak with considerable earnestness. He, however, was enabled to control his feelings, and to argue calmly with his wife: and thus he answered her—“ My dear Jane, in every case of this kind, the question is not what, according to the crooked policy and unsteady principles of worldly wisdom, is best to be done, or to be left undone? but what is the will of God? and how shall we best accommodate ourselves to the dispensations of Providence? The Almighty has said, ‘ Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his.’ By this command, I understand that we are forbidden to allow our thoughts to wander in any way after delights and worldly possessions which are withheld from us by the Lord; and for these reasons, which are apparent, as well, doubtless, as for many others of which we are ignorant, namely, that we may be, in the first place, set free from those sickly longings which never can be satisfied, and, in the second place, because we cannot know what would be the effects of those things, when obtained, which we desire. For the good or evil of any earthly possession depends on so many contingencies, that no man can say this or that would be for my good, or this or that would add to my

happiness. For instance: could we by any manœuvre which we might devise insure to ourselves Sir Thomas Freeman for a son-in-law, are we assured that he would make our Emmeline happy, or that she would not be a better wife to a poorer man, or that her children, if she had any, would be blessed in their father? There is One, however, who knows all these things, who has undertaken to direct every event for the good of his people, and who has also the control of all contingencies. This being the case, what madness, as well as what sin, it is in any of his creatures to attempt to take upon themselves, even in thought, the management of their own affairs in any way contrary to those indications of his divine will which he has vouchsafed to bestow upon us!"

"But may there not be such a thing," said Mrs. Vaughen, "as taking our affairs out of the hands of God by suddenly sinking under the pressure of circumstances, as well as by refusing to bend at all? I have heard you say myself, my dear, and that often, that there is sometimes as much sullenness in affecting extreme submission to the will of a superior as in insolently rising against it."

"Certainly, my dear," said Mr. Vaughen, "I have made this remark, and, as you say, often: but attempting to accommodate ourselves to the divine will, and to moderate our desires in compliance with the dealings of Providence, can never be termed an act of rebellion, especially when cheerfully done, as we hope, by the divine grace, to do what is now before us."

"Well, my dear," said Mrs. Vaughen, "I say no more, but submit to your better judgment; and I have no doubt, that, in this case, as in many others that are past, I shall have reason to say that your judgment is better than mine." So saying, she arose, and, smiling with much sweetness, went to seek her daughters, and to communicate to them the subject of her recent conversation with their father.

As soon as she was gone, Mr. Vaughen took his hat, and hastened to make the purposed proposal to Mrs. Alice Turner; for Mr. Vaughen was prompt in all his actions, when once he felt convinced that what he was about to do was fit to be done.

Mr. Vaughen met with all the success he could desire

from Mrs. Alice Turner, and returned home to dinner in better spirits than he had enjoyed for some months.

The traces of tears were upon the features of Mrs. Vaughen and Emmeline, but Henrietta looked, as usual, perfectly calm and serene, when the little family met at dinner; at which meal Mr. Vaughen thus addressed those who constituted the endeared little circle that surrounded him: "I feel that we are doing right, my beloved ones, I feel it, I am convinced of it, and I am happy that we are about to exchange a load of real and lasting cares for a few that are merely imaginary; and as there are some among us who seem better able to contend with imaginary distresses than others, I think those individuals must volunteer to be foremost in these encounters. What do you say, Henrietta?" added Mr. Vaughen, smiling; "what do you say? Will you assist me in receiving our visitors for the first time in our new parlour?"

"With all my heart, papa," said Henrietta, smiling. But Mrs. Vaughen and Emmeline, though they attempted to smile, were unable; for Mrs. Vaughen was busy, in imagination, in filling her kitchen with all the fine acquaintances she had in the world, and she pictured to herself a thousand sneers and contemptuous looks which we cannot suppose that any real lady would bestow on such an occasion: and poor Emmeline thought of Sir Thomas; and though she had no particular regard or esteem for this young man, yet was it exceedingly disagreeable to her to think that if ever he again honoured the family with a visit, he must needs be ushered into the kitchen; and this tormenting thought not only offered itself at that time, but was continually present with her during the remainder of that day, and also for several days afterwards. Thus dearly did she pay for the pleasure of being compared to stars and roses; and in like manner, or in a manner not wholly dissimilar, will you be made to suffer, my young reader, whenever you have allowed yourself to hearken with complacency to the whispers of the flatterer.

Mr. Vaughen had penetration enough to discover much of what was passing in the minds of his wife and his younger daughter. He therefore accelerated his operations as much as possible, and, with the help of

Henrietta, managed matters so well, that, before the next Saturday evening, the kitchen-maid was disposed of, Mrs. Alice Turner and her little attendant were settled in the parlour and best bed-room, and his wife and daughters established in the kitchen, which last apartment had undergone a thorough cleaning and whitewashing, and was duly accommodated with a neat table and chairs, placed near the bow window, on a small square carpet; insomuch, that, although certain bright culinary utensils ranged against the wall, and a large grate, for the purpose of cooking, still indicated this apartment to be but a kitchen, yet order, neatness, and convenience, rendered it an abode at which the nicest taste had no occasion to revolt.

The first meal of which the family partook in the kitchen was their tea, on the Friday afternoon. The tea-things were arranged on an oak table, which had been so highly polished, that it reflected, as from a mirror, the flame of two candles placed in polished brass candlesticks. The fire blazed on the hearth, the kettle hissed upon the fire, and some excellent white bread and nice butter stood on the table, the doors were shut, the clock ticked in the corner, and nurse sat working at her own little table, at a respectful distance. Such was the state of things, when Emmeline, after some delay, was desired by her mother to call her father to tea; and while the young lady reluctantly obeyed, the tender-hearted Mrs. Vaughen said to her eldest daughter, "Your poor father, my dear, he has hitherto borne it well, but I fear he will feel a little this evening."

While she was yet speaking, Mr. Vaughen followed his daughter into the kitchen; and, placing himself in the chair provided for him, looked first at his wife, then at his daughters, then at the old domestic sitting at a small table, which had been prepared for her especial service: when, addressing his wife, he exclaimed, "Why, my dear, I thought we were to have been very miserable this evening!"

A momentary pause succeeded this remark, and this was followed by a burst of laughter, first begun by Emmeline, and instantly seconded by Henrietta; after which, it was found impossible even for Mrs. Vaughen herself to support the least appearance of dejection.

And as, when the evening meal was finished, every one was engaged in their usual employments, (the mother knitting, the father reading aloud, and the daughters occupied with their needles,) it seemed as if neither of them retained a consciousness of the inelegance of the apartment to which they were reduced.

The portion of Scripture which Mr. Vaughen chose for his comments before the evening devotion of the family was this passage of the Lord's Prayer—" Thy kingdom come ;" and he took occasion, from it, to speak of that glorious time when the reign of our Lord shall be acknowledged throughout the earth, and when simple Christian habits and principles will become universal. He took this opportunity to point out what he had often, in times past, suggested to his family—that although nearly two thousand years were already past since the coming of the Redeemer, during which time many of the kingdoms and tribes of the earth had been successively called by the name of our Lord and his Christ, and although the great men and rulers, the wise and learned of these kingdoms, have professed, for ages past, to be regulated by the laws of God, as delivered in the Bible—yet that it was his opinion, that the whole economy of society, ecclesiastical, political, civil, social, and domestic, was still pervaded and influenced by false principles, and that a very great and thorough change must take place in men's opinions, before the customs of life could be said to be modelled in any degree according to strict Christian principles. He further spoke of the harmlessness and simplicity of the Christian character, and pointed out the contrast between that and the artificial spirit, as it were, of the worldly man, who is ever dwelling upon externals, and laying the greatest imaginable stress upon those minutiae of life which are of no importance, but which often fully occupy the mind, to the neglect and destruction of the soul and its everlasting interests.

Thus passed this first tranquil evening in the kitchen; and the next morning, while their only servant discharged the more menial duties of the household, Henrietta and Emmeline very carefully set out the breakfast-table, and garnished the brown loaf with such opening buds as the early spring afforded: neither did they neglect their own appearance, but, on the contrary, they

took all possible pains to set off their plain and simple garments with the most careful neatness. These little attentions particularly pleased their affectionate father, who availed himself of the occasion to press upon his family the particular duty of neatness under their present circumstances, pointing out that there was no necessary connexion between a narrowness of income and coarse, disgusting habits, adding, that he considered the most perfect state of society to consist in moderate desires, with elegant manners. The rest of this day passed off with great ease and comfort to all parties, and with far less confusion than Mrs. Vaughen expected.

The next day was Sunday, a day on which, from its being wholly appropriated to sacred exercises of various kinds, no reference was made by any of the family to worldly affairs; and if the circumstance of the kitchen was remembered, it was associated with no other sentiment than that of gratitude, that so easy a remedy as a mere change of apartments had been found sufficient to remove those cares with which, for many weeks past, the father of this family had been evidently oppressed.

The few days immediately following were rainy; a circumstance at which Mrs. Vaughen secretly rejoiced, as she hoped that the inclemency of the weather would be a means of keeping off those visitors on whom she had not yet learned to think without many nervous apprehensions. But the Thursday morning proving remarkably fine, her trepidations were renewed, and, as she sat employed with her needle at the window, she started at the sound of every wheel-carriage, whether barrow, cart, or waggon, which came rumbling down the village street; and at length, about noon, being told by a poor neighbour that Mrs. Smith's coach was at the door of The Shop, (by which we mean the establishment of a kind of huckster, haberdasher, grocer, and tallow-chandler, who supplied the country round with an inconceivable variety of necessary articles,) she fairly took flight, and escaped by the back door, taking her younger daughter by the arm, and treacherously leaving Henrietta alone to encounter the storm which was rolling towards them in the shape of a coach-and-four, with two outriders.

Henrietta, who was pursuing her ordinary studies in

her own apartment, started up when she heard the carriage drive up to the door; and, without waiting to consider what she should say, knowing that she should rather lose than gain courage by delay, arrived in the hall just in time to take Mrs. Smith's hand as she stepped out of the carriage.

This lady was the only daughter of a very rich banker in a neighbouring town, a person who had been brought up to believe that all human excellence consisted in the possession of money, and of that which money can procure; and she was now actually come to investigate the truth of the report that she had just heard in the shop, namely, that Mr. Vaughen had let his parlour to Mrs. Alice Turner, and was himself living in the kitchen. As she was, however, aware that she might possibly save Miss Vaughen from the pain of some confusion, by acknowledging that she was already acquainted with this fact, she affected entire ignorance; and, having returned Henrietta's compliments with a slight but familiar acknowledgment, she pushed forward to the parlour, saying, "I suppose I shall find your mamma within;" at the same time intimating by a motion which her footman understood, that he might go into the kitchen, the door of which was open.

Henrietta was startled by this freedom: supposing it, however, to be no other than an ordinary proof of this lady's ill breeding, (of which she had before seen many instances,) she caught Mrs. Smith's hand, and, endeavouring to detain her, said, "Will you permit me, my dear Madam, to explain to you a circumstance which has taken place in our family, and owing to which we do not esteem ourselves entitled to entertain visitors of your rank and situation in life?"

Henrietta was proceeding with her remarks, when Mrs. Smith turned round hastily from the parlour-door, on the lock of which she had already placed her hand, and fixing her eyes with unabashed effrontery on the blushing face of the young lady, she at the same time called to her powdered footman, and ordered him to wait her further commands—thus detaining him in a situation in which he could not avoid hearing every word that should be said.

Henrietta, on perceiving this, hesitated, looking first

at Mrs. Smith, then at the servant, while for a moment shame and agitation almost choked her utterance; not, indeed, that she felt shame from a consciousness of her own situation, but from a sense of the want of delicacy of her visiter. She soon, however, recovered herself, being supported by the conviction that she was in the path of duty, and that she was, perhaps, that very moment shielding her beloved mother from the insults to which she herself was exposed; and remarking to Mrs. Smith that their present situation would not permit her to enter into such an explanation as the intimacy which had long subsisted between the families seemed to require, she added, that she was truly sorry that it was not in her power to ask Mrs. Smith to sit down, having no parlour into which she could invite her.

"No parlour!" said Mrs. Smith, looking first at her footman, and then at Henrietta, "why, Miss Vaughen, how am I to understand this? But perhaps you are painting and papering?"

"No, Madam," said Henrietta, calmly; "we have let our parlour to Mrs. Alice Turner."

"To Mrs. Alice Turner!" repeated Mrs. Smith: "you amaze me, Miss Vaughen! But you have surely furnished some other room for your own use?"

"No, Madam, we have no other room which we could possibly devote to such purpose; we find it necessary to live in our kitchen: and, as I could not think of asking you to enter such an apartment, I am altogether obliged to deprive myself of your company."

Mrs. Smith appeared as if she had some difficulty to restrain a laugh while Henrietta spoke: she, however, made no remark or comment on her speech; but, turning abruptly round, she walked coolly out of the house, stood on the step to ask her servants some unimportant questions, stepped into the carriage, ordered the door to be shut and the coachman to drive on, and seemed scarcely to remember (just as the horses were set in motion) to say, "Good morning, Miss Vaughen;" adding this direction to the footman, who stood with his hat off at the door, "Drive to Sir Thomas's."

The carriage had left the court, and the last out-rider was out of sight, before Henrietta moved from the spot where her visiter had left her. She then turned in

haste, and went to her father's study, half inclined to reproach him, in her sweet and daughter-like manner, for not coming to her assistance, when she now, for the first time, remembered that he had said, while at breakfast, that he should be obliged to be from home during part of the morning. A glass door, which her father had made, leading from the study into the garden, was open. Henrietta passed through it. She was oppressed; she felt her cheeks glow, and her heart heavy. She heaved two or three deep sighs, and took one or two turns along an embowered walk shaded by filbert bushes. She sighed again. Her limbs, which from agitation had been cold, began to be warm; the flush left her cheeks: she sighed again two or three times; and then, taking out her Pocket-Bible, she read a few verses as she slowly paced the shadowy path; and presently she had so entirely forgotten Mrs. Smith and her powdered footman, that, when called in to dinner, not a trace of care remained on her placid countenance; and, when questioned about Mrs. Smith's visit, she did not convey the slightest idea to her parents of any thing unpleasant having occurred—a precaution by which she not only spared her mother some nervous tremors, but supported her parents' dignity, by enabling them, when next they met that lady, to accost her with their accustomed cordiality and ease.

And here let us pause, to recommend a similar mode of conduct to young people in general, who too often, contrary to the example of the lovely Henrietta, accustom themselves to excite and irritate the painful feelings of their parents on occasions of slight offence, thereby evidently disregarding the favour of Him who hath said, *Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.* (Matt. v. 9.)

The next morning opened with wonted serenity on the quiet parsonage; and Henrietta and Emmeline, having performed their daily studies, which they were above all anxious at this time never to omit, were recreating themselves, about noon, with making a tart of young gooseberries, the first of the season.

The father and mother had walked out together, and the nurse was also absent, being engaged in making certain marketings. The young ladies, being alone in the

house, had locked the front door, and had begun their operations in their neat kitchen, themselves also being neatly dressed, and exhibiting no other symptom of their occupation as cooks excepting that Emmeline had tied a clean coloured apron before her. As their minds were easy, and their spirits cheerful, they talked to each other while thus engaged; and Henrietta, whose employment it was to cut off the stalks of the gooseberries with her scissars, was laughing at Emmeline for plunging her hands quite up to the wrists in the paste, remarking, that a more elegant way would have been to have performed the whole operation through the intervention of a spoon.

Emmeline smiled at this remark, and told her that she was a mighty adept in the art of speaking on ordinary occurrences in an elegant phraseology.

While the sisters were thus innocently gay, Emmeline felt something tickling the back of her neck, and, turning round hastily, she saw Sir Thomas behind her, who had just touched her with a sprig of sweetbriar which he held in his hand. The touch of Ithuriel's spear had scarcely a more powerful effect on the arch fiend, than the harmless sweetbriar had upon the lovely Emmeline, who, uttering a half shriek, reddened from her forehead to her throat, and, looking on her apron and her well-plastered hands, stood like one detected in the most atrocious act.

Henrietta, who had looked behind her on hearing her sister's exclamation, immediately arose on seeing the baronet, and politely, but somewhat coldly, asked him if he wished to see her father.

"No, fair lady," he replied, "I am not come to see Mr. Vaughen, because I know that he is from home; I met him and your mother but a minute since in the street: I therefore came with the sole view of paying my respects to you and to your sister."

"And pray, Sir," asked Henrietta, "how did you obtain admittance? The front door is locked."

"So I perceived," replied the gentleman; "but, happily, I knew of the glass door of the little study, and found it open."

Henrietta was silent, being really at a loss how next to act, and not wishing to make too serious a matter of

what she considered as nothing more than a frolic, though not a justifiable one.

In the mean time, the young gentleman had turned again to his favourite Emmeline, and was complimenting her on her extraordinary bloom, remarking, that the natural delicacy of her hands wanted not the aid of art to add to their whiteness.

Emmeline looked at her hands, her unfortunate coloured apron, and the various bright tin and brazen implements arranged along the walls of the apartment, and was on the very point of bursting into tears, when her sister, dreading what might be the end of all this, gave her an opportunity of retreating, by hinting to her that she would do well to go and wash her hands.

The young lady instantly hastened to the door which opened into the hall, but was prevented from reaching it by Sir Thomas, who, springing towards it before her, set his back against it, and laughingly said that she should not so escape. Emmeline, again agitated and confused, stood still; and the baronet, who was dressed in black, (being in mourning for his father,) braved her to take revenge, which he said was now in her power, as she had nothing to do but to place her delicate hands on his coat.

Exactly on the opposite side of the room there was another door, and Emmeline, being directed by her sister's eye to this means of escape, turned round with a quickness which the baronet did not foresee, and immediately took flight, pulling the door after her with a violence which, though caused by haste, the young gentleman failed not to attribute to displeasure.

Almost at the same moment, Henrietta walked calmly to the other end of the room, and, sitting down at a table, which stood in the bow window, took up her needle, and began to work.

In the mean time, Sir Thomas, being startled by the slamming of the door in his face, shrugged up his shoulders, and, looking towards Henrietta, he said, "Upon my honour, Miss Vaughen, you have a dignity of air and manner which is totally independent of circumstance."

"That is not dignity, Sir Thomas," replied Henrietta, calmly, but sweetly, "which depends on externals; and therefore it is perhaps necessary for persons to be de-

priv'd of all outward circumstances of pomp, before we can decide upon the real nobility of their minds."

Sir Thomas (coxcomb as he was) seemed awed by her manner, and by this remark. He followed her to the table, and, sitting down not very far from her, he took up her scissars, and began cutting a piece of thread to atoms, while he stammered out a kind of apology for his behaviour, saying, "Now I see, Miss Vaughen, that you are offended, and that I have vexed your lovely sister; and, upon my honour, I do declare I never intended it, I assure you I did not, not in the least, nothing could be further from my thoughts: for, of all men in the world, I respect your father; and as to your mother and yourselves, I don't know any ladies on the face of the earth of whom I think better."

Henrietta mildly replied, "I have always believed you, Sir Thomas, to be a sincere friend of my parents; I therefore cannot suppose that you meant to offend us, or to make us feel the slight inconveniences of our present situation more than is necessary. I know that it is the intention of my father to explain to you, as to a friend, the circumstances which have led him to retrench his manner of living, which he rather chose to do than to be a burden on his friends. We hope, indeed, that it may not be necessary for us to observe this rigid economy for many years; but, be the time short or long, I feel myself perfectly reconciled to the measure, and only regret it on account of my parents, who can no longer associate with those persons to whose society they have been accustomed."

Sir Thomas stammered out, that he already knew and applauded Mr Vaughen's motives of conduct.

Henrietta, in reply, remarked, that she felt assured that no one could respect her father the less for his cheerful submission to the divine will; and she added, that she had great pleasure in knowing that his own peace was greatly promoted by the plans which he had adopted.

The baronet muttered something about great sacrifices and strength of mind, &c. &c. and added, that he believed there were few men of Mr. Vaughen's family and rank who could have brought their minds to make such a sacrifice.

Henrietta could have said that she did not see anything so remarkable in the sacrifice; for it appeared to her pious and simple mind that it was incomparably preferable to live in a clean and cheerful kitchen for a few years, than to be constantly under the axes and harrows of perplexing cares. She had, however, discernment enough to perceive that Sir Thomas could not understand any sentiment of this kind; and she therefore dropped the subject, and entered upon others of a more commonplace character, with which conversation Sir Thomas seemed to be so well pleased, that he lingered till her parents' return.

Thus did this amiable young lady, by her forbearance and address, a second time disarm the malice of the world, and sustained that dignity which a more petulant conduct would have infallibly overthrown.

As soon as Henrietta could make her escape, she flew to her beloved Emmeline, whom she found weeping violently in her own room. She sat down by her, kissed her, and said, "My beloved sister, why do you weep? why do you thus afflict yourself? Had you been found doing any thing that was either disgraceful in itself, or decidedly out of your line of duty, there would have been some reason for tears; or had you been surprised in a slovenly dress, when engaged in the way of duty, there would have been a more just occasion for shame: but, as neither the one nor the other was the case, wherefore is there any reason either for blushes or tears?"

"But I know," said Emmeline, sobbing, "I know, by Sir Thomas's manner, that he despised me, when he saw me with a coloured apron on, and my hands all covered with flour. Did you not remark his altered and forward manner? Did we ever experience such familiar treatment from him when we received him in our parlour and appeared like ladies?"

"I did observe his manner," said Henrietta, "and I disapproved of it. But why should you blush for his want of courtesy and delicacy?"

"I expected that it would be so," said Emmeline. "I dreaded his coming."

"Then you entertained a much worse opinion of Sir Thomas than I did, Emmeline; and I therefore wonder that this affair should have affected you, who have met

only with what you foresaw, more than it did me, who have seen a fault in a neighbour which I did not expect to find."

"But I thought," said Emmeline, "I thought,—I fancied,—I had some idea, that—that—he had some regard for me."

"Regard for you, Emmeline!" said Henrietta: "then it is perhaps happy that you are so soon undeceived."

"O," said Emmeline, "I did not mean that I supposed that he really liked me: you know what I mean—only that he respected me. I did suppose he respected me."

"If respect is all that you expected from him," said Henrietta, "you will have it still, my Emmeline: no man will or can despise the dutiful daughter who submits cheerfully to her father's will."

Emmeline sighed. She had indulged other views in reference to Sir Thomas which she had hardly acknowledged to herself; and they were now, as she thought, destroyed by the hard necessity, to which she found herself reduced, of living in a kitchen. She was, consequently, very unhappy: and thus are we always punished, whenever we allow our wishes to outrun our circumstances, and permit our desires to exceed the will of the Almighty.

Henrietta saw, by her sister's extreme grief, that more was passing in her mind than she had at first been aware of. She therefore spoke no more of Sir Thomas; but animadverted, in general terms, on the duty of submitting to the divine will, and on the peace which instantly follows, when the mind is brought, through the influence of the Holy Spirit, to that state of contentment which never desires any thing beyond that which the Lord bestows, be it much or be it little. She then adverted to a late discourse of her father's upon the tenth commandment, wherein he shewed the spiritual nature of that commandment, pointing out its reference to the inmost thoughts of the heart, and the prohibition under which it lays the imagination from ever wandering after earthly goods which are not lawful objects of our desires. Much more she added on this subject, and that with so much sweetness and gentleness, that her sister insensibly became soothed, and assured her that she would endeavour

to appear before her parents at dinner with her accustomed cheerfulness.

Emmeline accordingly arose, and, having bathed her eyes, went out into her garden to attend her flowers and bees, in which interesting occupation she soon lost all recollection of Sir Thomas, or only thought with gratitude of the circumstances by which her eyes had been so soon opened to his real intentions respecting her.

The next day was Sunday. Mrs. Vaughen, being ill, stayed at home with her daughter Emmeline, and Henrietta accompanied her father to church. The morning was fine; but it was one of those days in spring when frequent showers drive the traveller to take shelter under some friendly tree, and when the sun is seen shining in all his glory on one side of a hill while the rain is beating on another.

In consequence of these fluctuations of the weather, the congregation was detained in the church-porch for some time after divine service, and Henrietta was during a considerable time standing near the Dowager Lady Freeman, the mother of Sir Thomas, and Mrs. Smith. These ladies were busily engaged in conversation with each other on the subject of a grand dinner which was to be given the following day at Stanbrook Court, and Henrietta supposed that she was not observed by them. She accordingly stood quite still, till, perceiving that the eyes of both ladies were directed towards her, she courtseyed, and was going to speak, when they both nodded carelessly, as to an inferior, and then, turning away from her, they proceeded with their conversation.

Henrietta coloured, but, instantly recovering herself, stood composedly till Lady Freeman's carriage drew up to the porch, and the two ladies departed together. Henrietta then, by their removal, found herself standing next to a widow, who, with her only son, had just taken a farm in the parish, and whom she had never seen till that day, as this was the stranger's first appearance at church.

This widow was still in weeds; and the sorrowful yet pious resignation of her countenance instantly attracted the attention and admiration of Miss Vaughen. She was leaning on the arm of her son, a fine young man, of an amiable aspect, who was also in deep mourning.

As Henrietta had never been introduced to these persons, she knew that it would have been improper to speak first, and therefore she remained silent, till her father, coming out of the interior part of the church, in which he had been hitherto engaged by a christening, addressed the widow and her son with his usual ease and courtesy, and introduced his daughter to the mother.

A friendly conversation was immediately commenced between Mr. Vaughen and this lady, whose name was Etherington; and, as the rain still continued, there was opportunity for them to discourse on various subjects.—Mr. Vaughen asked the widow how she liked her farm, and expatiated on the beauty of its situation amid woods and waterfalls.

Her answer was full of piety, and expressed her desire to be content in whatever situation it might please the Lord to appoint her lot. She then spoke of religion as her chief delight, and added, that the Almighty had been especially merciful to her in sparing her son to be the prop and comfort of her age.

Mr. Vaughen, on hearing this, turned to the young man, offered him his friendship, and asked him whether he had time for reading: “and if so,” added he, “any book in my possession is at your service.”

By this time, the rain had ceased, and the party began to walk homewards. The proposed Sunday-school then became the topic of discourse, and Mr. Etherington offered his services to assist in the instruction of the boys. The old lady and her son walked up to the gate of the parsonage with Mr. Vaughen and his daughter, but would not go in, although they promised to call soon and pay their compliments to the rector’s lady; which promise they fulfilled the next evening, when they drank tea at the parsonage, giving much pleasure to Mr. and Mrs. Vaughen by their unaffected and pious deportment: and so well pleased was the rector with the young man, that he entered into discourse with him on several interesting and important subjects, and recommended to him to devote his leisure hours to a certain regular course of reading which he pointed out to him, at the same time also offering to lend him the necessary books; and taking care to convince him how compatible the cultivation of the mind is with the mode of life in which he

was engaged, particularly in the case of those individuals who are not induced, from an inordinate desire of worldly riches, to undertake more than they can manage consistently with peace of mind and necessary leisure. Mr. Vaughen also availed himself of this opportunity to expatiate on a subject on which he had bestowed much thought, namely, the extensively fatal effects of covetousness, and the various forms which it assumes, together with its frequently ruinous consequence in filling the mind with distracting cares, and alienating the attention from the concerns of the soul. He also quoted several texts from Scripture that bore upon his purpose, namely—*Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee:* (Heb. xiii. 5.) and he remarked, that covetousness not only consisted, as many suppose, in amassing earthly possessions, but in our even desiring that which the Lord either entirely withdraws from us, or renders unattainable by us without the sacrifice of better things. He, moreover, observed, that agriculture was generally considered a simple and innocent employment; but he gave it as the result of his observation, that since man, through ambition, had joined house to house, and field to field, it had become an employment as adverse to spiritual welfare as any upon earth: and, therefore, he expressed his hope, that his young friend, who professed himself to be a follower of that meek and lowly Jesus, who on earth took upon him the form of a servant, would be content with moderate gains and a simple mode of living, and would desire no more of the goods of this world than might be placed within his reach lawfully and honestly by his heavenly Father.

The young man seemed to pay great attention to the conversation of the good minister, which perhaps had not the less effect from the admiration with which he had observed the modest and elegant daughters of his pastor.

And here let me stop to make this observation, which may be useful to my readers, although somewhat foreign from the immediate purport of the story,—that whereas the influence of unholy females has not unfrequently the most destructive effect on the minds of the young men

with whom they associate; the example, on the contrary, of modest, holy, and lovely young women is found to possess a peculiar power in exalting, refining, and we may say ennobling, such young men as have the opportunity of observing them, and the sense and taste to appreciate their merits.

But we now leave these more humble scenes, in order to give some account of what passed the same day at Stanbrook Court, where Lady Freeman, her son, Mr. and Mrs. Smith, and many others of the gentry of the neighbourhood, were assembled to drink the Squire's health on account of his birth-day: and, as the Squire had lately received a present of a rich service of Worcester china, and had also been persuaded by his sisters to purchase a new and very handsome epergne, the two spinsters were in remarkably high spirits on the occasion, and displayed their exultation by a good deal of hauteur of manner, and occasional contemptuous expressions levelled against their neighbours.

It was evident to all those of the party who came from the neighbourhood of Mr. Henry Vaughen's residence, that the story of that gentleman's plans of economy had not yet reached the other side of the country; and though some of the company would have rejoiced in the opportunity of humbling the family at whose cost they were entertained, by the relation of this extraordinary circumstance; yet most of the party had sufficient politeness, or we should rather say self-love, to wish that the disagreeable tale might come through the medium of another.

There was, however, one person present whose feelings were an exception to this general sentiment by which the rest were pervaded, namely, Mrs. Smith, who was very glad that the tale had not yet reached Stanbrook Court, and that none of the present company chose to take upon themselves the office of informer, because she coveted it for herself, and was waiting only until she might be able to do it with most effect.

This lady had long disliked the Vaughen family, because they possessed that in which she was deficient, namely, a respectable pedigree, and she particularly hated the two single sisters of the Squire, because they had once or twice contrived to utter in her presence cer-

tain sly inuendoes upon this tender point. Mrs. Smith had heard of the new epergne; for she was one of those ladies who condescend to receive their information from the lowest source, and, consequently, this important circumstance, which was intended to have occasioned a surprise to the company, was no longer a secret to this lady, and she had maliciously resolved to wait the moment of the appearance of this piece of splendour, to open her tale so abundant in considerations deeply humbling to a worldly mind.

Accordingly, when the servants had successfully fixed the sparkling pyramid upon the table, she turned to Miss Vaughen, near whom she sat, at the head of the table, and said how afflicted she was to hear of Mr. Henry Vaughen's heavy loss.

On this, the attention of every individual of the family present was instantly excited; and the Squire and his sisters exclaimed, with one voice, "What loss?—we have heard of none."

"A heavy loss of property," said Mrs. Smith, proceeding undauntedly to feed herself with custard-pudding: "poor Mr. Vaughen has lately had a severe loss."

"A severe loss of property!" said the Squire, recovering from his alarm, "I am glad it is no worse; for," added he, with a loud voice, and in his usual coarse manner, "if Harry Vaughen were to lose all he had, the evil might soon be repaired; eh, Sir Thomas, is it not so?"

Sir Thomas laughed, and hinted that Mr. Vaughen's treasures consisted of his lovely daughters; a remark which offended the younger ladies of the family as greatly as the Squire's did the elder.

"Brother," said Miss Vaughen, "how strangely and inconsistently you talk! You know our brother has a very pretty property, besides the income of the rectory. Mrs. Henry Vaughen was, you well know, a woman of handsome fortune. But this loss, Mrs. Smith, what is it? how did it happen? and when?" The old lady then looked at her sister, and said, "Is it not strange, very strange, Penelope, that we should never have heard any thing of it?"

"But perhaps Mrs. Smith can give us some informa-

tion?" said Mrs. Penelope. "From what quarter did the blow come?"

Mrs. Smith replied, that she did not know the particulars, nor any thing further on the subject, than that Mr. Vaughen had been obliged to dismiss a servant, let his best apartments, and reside with his family in the kitchen.

On receiving this intelligence, which was by no means softened by Mrs. Smith's manner of relating it, the elder ladies blushed and bridled; the younger ones tried to laugh; and the Squire, hallooing as if after his fox-hounds, cried out, with an oath, "Nothing more than a whim of Harry Vaughen's, depend upon it, Mrs. Smith; though, by the bye, it is a whim which no man in his senses would really indulge."

This remark of the Squire's, and his apparent and indeed real unconcern on the occasion, did more to disarm the malice of Mrs. Smith than the most elaborate discussion could have done; and, as he continued to turn off the whole matter with a laugh and a hoot, that lady would have considered herself entirely foiled, had not she perceived in the flushed cheeks and restless glances of the two elderly ladies the symptoms of wounded pride and smothered mortification.

When, after tea and cards, the guests had taken their leave of Stanbrook Court, a violent family scene took place in the drawing-room, and the smothered displeasure of the ladies broke forth with more violence from their long restraint: neither was the anger confined to the aunts, the nieces were equally offended; for Sir Thomas, in the true spirit of mischief, had described to them the kitchen scene, and all the particulars relative to the gooseberry tart, not failing, at the same time, to excite the jealousy of their cousins, by asserting, what he really thought, that the elegance of these young ladies was such, as to enable them to rise above every circumstance, even those unpropitious ones of coloured aprons and hands covered with meal.

But this story of the kitchen scene, as told by Sir Thomas, and repeated by the daughters of the Squire, assumed an entirely different aspect, and tended not a little to inflame the anger of the aunts.

"What an unaccountable and degrading whim is this of my brother's!" said the elder Mrs. Vaughen.

"In a man of his family too!" said Mrs. Penelope. "Brother, you must go over to-morrow, and expostulate with him, and persuade him to give up this strange fancy."

"And unkennel him from his kitchen," said the Squire, "and his lodger from the parlour. Is that what you would have me do?"

"What extraordinary language you always use, brother," said Mrs. Dorothea Vaughen, "so extremely inelegant: now, in that respect, I cannot blame Henry, his language is always elegant; and for such a man to live in a kitchen!"

"Do you mean to say, sister, that my manners would be more suitable for the kitchen, than my brother's? Well, perhaps, it may be so; but on that very account I ought to keep clear of such situations, lest it should be said of me, that I was got into my right place at last."

"It is very surprising," said Miss Penelope, "that you can never be serious, brother, no not even when the family honour is at stake."

"I am serious," said the Squire, "for, to tell you the truth, I am very angry with Henry, though I put a better face on his folly before company than you did: but I tell you, I am angry; and, if I live as long, I'll let my brother know as much, before this time to-morrow." So saying, he withdrew to his own apartment, and the family committee adjourned for the night.

The next morning, the Squire, booted and spurred, and accompanied by his servant, rode to his brother's house, and arrived about noon. Mr. Vaughen was in his study, and Mrs. Vaughen and her daughters were seated at their respective employments before the open window, when the Squire galloped up as if riding for his life, and, having knocked violently at the house door, which was, however, open, walked into the hall, calling aloud to his servant to take the horses to the Lion, and stay there himself; adding, "There is no place in this house for you, John, unless you mean to sit down to table with your master."

The servant, bowing, but grinning at the joke, led away the horses, while the Squire, being left in the hall, began to halloo and shout as if he had been lost in a wood.

Mr. Henry Vaughen did not leave him long to call about him, but, having finished a sentence that he was writing, came out, and, expressing his pleasure in seeing him, invited him to come in.

Although Mr. Vaughen pointed to his study door, the Squire stood, looking round him, as if utterly bewildered, and at length said, "Where am I to go? They tell me you have no place fit to ask a gentleman into!"

"My study, brother," said Mr. Vaughen, smiling: "you have been in it before now, times out of number, it stands precisely where it did."

Mr Vaughen had repeated this invitation more than once before the Squire recollected himself, or seemed to be able to make up his mind whither next to direct his steps; he then strode forward, with his hat on, into the study, where, coming to a stand, he burst forth like an old hound at the instant of recovering a scent which had been lost by all the rest of the pack. "Harry Vaughen, I say, here am I, and I suppose you have already some shrewd notion of the business I am come about."

Mr. Henry Vaughen smiled, and pointed to a chair; but the Squire, striking the table with his horsewhip, proceeded to this effect: "If I ever sit down in this house again—" and there he stopped, for he did not dare to swear before his brother, and he could get no further, till the oaths which were upon his tongue were, in some sort, evaporated, if not in articulate words, in bluster and grimace—"if I ever sit down in this house again, my name is not Vaughen, and I am not the head of an old and respectable family; and now it's all out, Harry, and you may make the best of it."

"Well, brother," said Mr. Vaughen, smiling again, "and you have come all the way from Stanbrook Court to tell me as much. And may I not add, that I am glad of almost any occasion which brings a brother under my roof?"

"A brother!" repeated the Squire, trying to retain his anger, which was evaporating faster than he wished, "I never had a greater mind in my life to renounce you than I now have. Why, Harry Vaughen, you have set the whole country ringing with your fooleries! Why, they tell me, man, that you have let your parlour to

some old maid, and are actually living in your kitchen."

"All of which is perfectly true," said Mr. Henry Vaughen, "and I am ready to explain my motives to you for doing as I have done, without further preface:" at the same time he pushed the chair somewhat nearer to his brother, who, by this time, had thrown off his hat, and laid down his whip, and the next instant dropped into the very chair which he had just before so vehemently renounced.

Quiet being thus, in some degree, restored, Mr. Henry Vaughen began to state to his brother the motives of his conduct; adding, that, without the knowledge of the reasons which had induced him to enter upon such measures, it was impossible for him to judge of their propriety.

The Squire was silent, and Mr. Henry Vaughen then proceeded to give the proposed statement, taking it as a good sign, that his brother never interrupted him till he had said all he wished; which he knew would have its due weight with him, as he told him that he had but one alternative, either to retrench his expences, or to apply for money to his friends.

In reply to which, the Squire said, "Well, well, brother, if you can make yourself comfortable, we, to be sure, have no right to complain. I see now your motives, they are very honourable, there is no selfishness in them, they are gentlemanlike; and, depend upon it, the world will like you all the better by and by for your independence. But in the mean time, brother, should you stand in need of a few pounds, apply to me. Now mind you do, brother: helping a friend like you, who will exert himself, is not like supporting an idle family who don't care how much they receive from others."

"Dear brother," said Henry Vaughen, "your friendly offer is highly gratifying; because it proves to me, that I have not lost my brother. But you will scarcely believe me, when I tell you, that I am now a richer man than I have been since I was married: one hundred pounds a year was all I wanted, and by my recent arrangements I shall, at least, be the better by one hundred and thirty; thirty, therefore, will now remain in case of accident."

The anger of the Squire was now so far evaporated, that he consented to dine with his brother, although that dinner must be eaten in the kitchen: and Mr. Vaughen now secretly rejoiced in those habits of neatness and order on which he had always insisted, and by which his kitchen was rendered as comfortable a habitation as a Christian need desire.

The Squire was greatly delighted with the reception he received from his sister and her daughters; and he declared that the mutton chops, which had not been cooled by their passage from remote offices, were the best he had ever tasted in his life. He also commended his sister for her cheerful acquiescence in her husband's measures, and his nieces for their neatness and elegance of deportment; which he said was the more admirable, because they were sometimes obliged to stoop to menial employments.

Mr. Vaughen availed himself of his brother's good-humour to press upon him the important concerns of his soul; and failed not to point out the comfort and support that he, his wife, and children, had derived from religion under their late trials.

The Squire listened, but his brother feared that conviction had not as yet reached his heart: he, however, retained his good-humour during the whole of the evening; and when he returned home to his family, he increased their irritation not a little, by endeavouring to justify the conduct of his brother.

In return, however, for their reproaches, (for they did indeed reproach him, and that with considerable bitterness, for so suddenly acquiescing in his brother's views,) he told them his opinion, which was this; that his sister and her daughters, in their kitchen, managed every thing with so much quietness, order, and ease, that, in the comparison, they might put many a fine lady to shame in her drawing-room.

As it was now found totally useless to attempt to engage the Squire against his brother, it was determined that the ladies of the family should go over in a body, the next day, to Mr. Henry Vaughen's house, in order to try what they could do to induce him to abandon his present proceedings.

Agreeably with this plan, the coach was ordered to be

in readiness at a suitable hour the next day, and the indignant females all set off, armed with every argument which pride and prejudice could suggest, against the simple principles and straight forward maxims of the poor rector.

It happened, unfortunately, when the coach arrived, that no one was at home but Mrs. Vaughen and the nurse: the former was seated at work, in her usual situation, the pleasant bow-window, against which nothing could be said, but that it belonged to a kitchen; and though that kitchen was large, airy, and extremely neat, yet still it was a kitchen; and, in consequence, the smallest smoky parlour in existence would be preferred by any person whatever who had the least pretensions to taste.

Poor Mrs. Vaughen was sensible of the comforts of her kitchen, and often very grateful for them; at times, even going so far, as to profess that she should never desire a more comfortable apartment: notwithstanding which, she grew pale and red by turns as she saw the carriage approach, and wished that she had not been so near the window as to have been observed before she could make her escape. She called out in haste to nurse to fly away with some preparations for cooking, which the good woman had laid out on a dresser in a remote part of the room, thus occasioning a bustle and confusion, which was visible enough to the ladies, who had got out of their carriage, and were waiting in the hall.

Nurse having at length removed all these offensive objects, ran in a considerable flutter to the door, and ushered the visitors into the kitchen, where they found Mrs. Vaughen, trembling, agitated, and evincing every other indication of shame and irresolution.

The agitation of this lady, of course, afforded a great advantage to the others, who, without preamble, opened the occasion of their visit, and delivered their opinions in a manner the most decisive. "You are ruining your daughters, Mrs. Vaughen," said her husband's eldest sister, "by letting your parlour, and making them, as it were, your servants, the inmates of a kitchen, the companions of servants; and by this step, which will presently be irretrievable, you sink them, for life, below the rank in which they were born, and in which their edu-

cation and appearance entitled them to continue with credit to themselves and their relations."

It is a cruel thing to charge a tender parent with injuring a child, and Mrs. Vaughen felt this charge the more, as the opinion coincided with her own most private thoughts. She was conscious that her daughters were handsomer than young people generally are. She had observed Sir Thomas's passing preference for Emmeline; and she had more than once imagined, how her Emmeline would look if seated at the head of Sir Thomas's table, and possessing a right to all the honours of a baronet's lady.

In consequence of these secret feelings, she burst into tears, and taking her sister's hand, said, "But what, my dear sister, what could we have done? we were actually living far beyond our income, and should have been involved for life."

"Involved for life!" said Miss Penelope: "do I not understand, that the present pressure of your affairs is owing to your son's residence at the University? It will not be necessary for him to stay longer than two years more; and was it impossible for you to borrow three hundred pounds? is the sum so mighty as to involve you for life?"

"Where are we to get that sum?" said Mrs. Vaughen: "we have friends, but we could not expect them to advance it."

"Certainly not," said the other, "I am sure that neither I nor my sister could do any thing for you in that way: you know how small our incomes are; and our sister in town lives to the extent of her property, and our elder brother has a very expensive family. But you have a property of your own, two thousand pounds, I think, and consider how easy it would have been to have raised a few hundreds upon that."

The tears came into Mrs. Vaughen's eyes afresh on hearing this remark.—"But in case of our deaths, this two thousand pounds is all that our daughters will have to depend upon," she replied.

"In the mean time," said the aunt, "you are perhaps depriving them of advantageous settlements."

"And lowering them so sadly," said Miss Letitia Vaughen, the eldest daughter of the Squire: "I cannot

bear the thoughts of my dear cousins being found, as they were last week by Sir Thomas, engaged in the most menial employments."

"Poor Emmeline!" remarked the younger sister, "poor Emmeline! what must she have suffered on the occasion!"

The history of Sir Thomas's visit was then recounted at large, and represented in the most ridiculous point of view.

But we have already detailed enough of this conversation to give the reader an idea of all the rest: suffice it to say, that when Mr. Vaughen returned, he found his wife in hysterics, and the ladies chafing her temples with hartshorn.

It was not a little thing which could throw Mr. Vaughen off his guard; but, on this occasion, he was really angry, and reproved his elder sister in a manner which he had never before manifested towards her. She was somewhat intimidated, but not driven from her purpose; for she immediately began again with him, and went over every argument which she had before used with his wife.

He allowed that, as a sister, she had a right to speak her mind to him, but he said, that he would not suffer her interference with other individuals of his family.

She seemed offended, and had recourse to tears.

At length the family parted, but it was with such evident displeasure on his sister's part, that Mr. Vaughen was hurt, and withdrew to his little study to recover his composure in communion with his God.

When Mr. Vaughen was called to dinner, after this visit, he found his wife still in tears, his elder daughter looking serious, and his younger daughter as if labouring under some excessive affliction. He sat down, and, at first, said nothing: he then looked round him on the sorrowful faces which encircled his table, and, addressing these beloved ones, he said, "You are unhappy, my dear wife and children, and you make me feel that I am the cause: say but the word, and I will give notice to Mrs. Alice Turner to leave the house; we will return to our parlour, and we will raise the money by an insurance on my life, or any other plan that you can devise."

The affectionate wife and children could not bear this: they flew to his arms, and, melting into tears, they all

said, "No! no! we will remain as we are. We are very happy when the world will let us alone, and we will henceforward cease to think of the world."

Thus was the family peace by degrees restored: and when their dinner was finished they walked out together to drink tea with Mrs. Etherington, at her little farm, situated in one of the most retired and romantic valleys in the parish, and there, while they partook of the widow's cream and brown bread, they improved the time in religious conversation, and the young farmer became more and more pleased with the simple and lovely daughters of the rector; and though he had not yet acknowledged to himself which of the two he most admired, yet it appeared plainly enough to his mother, when, after their departure, he remarked, that the grave and placid countenance of Miss Henrietta conveyed to his mind a more lively idea of an angel than any face that he had ever before seen.

"She is a sweet young lady," said the mother, in reply, "and blessed will that man be who procures her for a wife."

Several days now passed, during which all went on smoothly at the rectory, and nothing had happened to make the family dissatisfied with their new plans; but at the end of this time a letter arrived from Adolphus, evidently penned under a state of the utmost distress of mind. The occasion of this letter was a communication which the young man had received from his aunt, in which she represented in so serious a light the sacrifices which his parents were making on his account, that it appeared to him a paramount duty to leave the University, and seek some other manner of life.

He confessed in this letter, that when he first received the communication from his aunt, he should, undoubtedly, have left the University privately, and gone to sea, (no other plan but a seafaring life occurring to him at the time,) had he not been restrained by his friend Theodore; since which, he had thought better of it, and, therefore, now wrote to his parents to request their permission to leave his present situation, and enter into some trade.

The parents were greatly hurt by this meddling interference of Miss Vaughen; and Mr. Vaughen said, "How

truly is it written, *A man's foes shall be they of his own household!*" He, however, thanked God for the providential manner in which his son, through the interposition of his friend, had been restrained from any rash action; and writing to Adolphus by return of post, he requested him to make himself easy, and to take no steps towards changing his plans till the long vacation. "You shall come, my son," said the tender father, "the Lord permitting, to spend the long vacation with us; and if you find one dimple the less in the cheek of your Emeline, or one wrinkle more in the brow of Henrietta, I will give you leave to bind yourself apprentice to any trade you please."

The letter concluded with an invitation to Theodore to accompany his friend.

The next letter from Adolphus was written in so much more cheerful a strain, that his parents were enabled to await the approach of the long vacation without anxiety; and, at the time appointed, the young men arrived, having walked the greater part of the way from Cambridge.

Now these four young people being again met, extreme joy was painted on every countenance; and if the circumstance of the kitchen was sometimes remembered, it was only recurred to as a matter of merriment.

This season of holiday was chosen by Mr. Vaughen as a proper time for establishing his Sunday-school; and he told the young academicians, that he should expect much from their superior skill in modelling his boys' school. He also associated his young people with himself in his walks to visit the poor of the parish; and on these occasions the happy young party often used to take their tea and sugar with them, and regale themselves at the doors of the cottages, especially in those situations where hills and groves and waterfalls presented their assemblages of beauties to delight the eye, and captivate the fancy. On these occasions, they were not unfrequently joined by Mr. Etherington, whose sincere and ardent desire for Christian instruction, not altogether, perhaps, unaccompanied with other motives, induced him to seek habitually the society of Mr. Vaughen and his family.

Thus sweetly passed away several months, during which Mr. Vaughen would often say to his son, "Well,

Adolphus, what are your thoughts of our sacrifices? Are we intolerably miserable in our kitchen? We cannot, it is certain, expect to be always as happy as we have been during these few months, it would not be best, perhaps, that we should be so; but do me this favour, my boy: if you hear of our being afflicted, and brought under trial, do not attribute it to the measures that we have taken to save money on your account; for I am persuaded that we shall never have reason to lament that step."

In this way elapsed the greater part of the long vacation: when, one evening, early in autumn, while the family were drinking tea, and seated in their bow-window, the party being augmented by Mr. Etherington, they were interrupted by the sound of a carriage, and, in an instant, the coach from Stanbrook Court came thundering up to the gate.

At the sight of this, the young men walked out at one door, and Mrs. Vaughen at another, leaving Mr. Vaughen and his daughters to receive their visitors.

The party from the Court consisted of the very persons who had visited the rectory some months before, with the addition of Mrs. Irwin, their married sister from London: they were all dressed with minute attention to display and fashion, and, on being ushered into the family apartment by Mr. Vaughen, took their seats, in great state, round the tea-table.

After some expressions of kindness on the part of Mr. Vaughen, which, however, were but coldly answered by his relations, declarations of hostility were made on the part of the ladies from Stanbrook, and Mrs. Irwin affirmed that the sole intention of her visit was to dissuade her brother from proceeding in those measures which, she said, must prove the ruin of his family.

"I am much obliged to you, sister Irwin," said Mr. Vaughen.

Mrs. Irwin looked earnestly at her brother, and said, "For what are you obliged, Henry?"

"Because," said Mr. Vaughen, "I cannot suppose that you would persuade me to discontinue those measures which I have adopted through absolute necessity, without furnishing me with means to supply that necessity. Three hundred pounds, or, perhaps, two hun-

dred and fifty pounds will be sufficient, if it suits you to present me with that sum."

The calm and unmoved manner in which Mr. Vaughen spoke seemed to puzzle his sisters. Mrs. Irwin, however, instantly declared, that she never entertained the least idea of supplying her brother's necessities.

"If that is the case," said Mr. Vaughen, "you will, at least, permit me, my dear sister, to take such measures as are within my power, to make up my own deficiencies of income; and henceforth, if you please, we will wave the subject."

The ladies appeared somewhat embarrassed, but, recovering themselves, after a pause, they renewed the attack, and urged every common place and worldly argument, which could be brought forward, and that with such obstinacy, that Emmeline left the room in tears. Mr. Vaughen himself seemed fatigued, and Henrietta's placid countenance assumed an air of deep dejection. The argument was still carried on, and Mr. Vaughen was urged to repeat the same answers over and over again; till, at length, not knowing how he could better shew his displeasure, he walked out of the room, leaving Henrietta to bear alone the whole brunt of the battle.

Thus left, the young lady entreated her aunts to say no more on the subject, observing, that on the matter in question she, of course, could have no will but that of her parents; and that, as long as they were determined on any measures which were in themselves innocent, she should think it right to encourage and assist their views.

The ladies were evidently offended at being thus forsaken; and, refusing to take any refreshment, they called for their carriage, and took their departure, leaving Henrietta in such a state of agitation, that she ran from the hall-door into the garden, and there seeking the retreat of one of those old-fashioned summer-houses of which we have before spoken, she burst into a flood of tears.

While she sat in one of the window-seats of this retreat, endeavouring to recover her composure before she appeared in the presence of her parents, she accidentally turned round, and perceived some one in the room with her. It was getting dusk, and she at first fancied that this person was her brother. She looked again: it was Mr. Etherington, who now presented himself before her,

and told her that he could not bear to see her affliction, especially as she was not one who shed tears without a cause, but who always evinced a cheerful and pleasing manner in the presence of her friends. She thanked him for his kind consideration, and told him, that she did not weep on her own account, but on that of her father and mother, who, while they were acting the part of the best of parents, and denying themselves many comforts for the sake of their children, were despised and hated by all the world.

Mr. Etherington then brought to her recollection these words of our Saviour—*If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.* (John xv. 19.) And he added, “If we are determined simply to follow the will of God, without reference to man’s pleasure, we shall be hated and despised; but this must not give us pain.” He then ventured to take the hand of Henrietta, and to make that modest but sincere declaration of his regard for her, which others might have foreseen, but which was wholly unexpected by the young lady herself, her extreme modesty habitually blinding her to the effect which her lovely appearance and deportment usually produced on those who beheld her.

A half-uttered reference to her parents was, however, the only answer which he could obtain from her on this occasion; for she instantly arose, and walked hastily to the house.

As it is not my design to dwell long on this part of my subject, I shall merely say, that Mr. Etherington, having made his sentiments known to Henrietta’s parents, and it appearing to them that the young lady was really attached to him, Mr. and Mrs. Vaughen gave their consent, and in a few months Henrietta became the wife of a farmer, and carried to her husband’s house that same simplicity of habit and elegance of manner which had rendered her so lovely and valuable as a daughter, and which qualities were the more estimable, as they were the fruits of the most decided Christian principles.

But, before this event took place, the young men returned to Cambridge, Adolphus Vaughen being perfectly satisfied that neither present misery nor future ruin were

likely to be the consequence of his parents' plans of economy.

In the mean time, the autumn advancing, the winter approached. Henrietta was happily married, and found great comfort in her husband and his mother. It was a part of Emmeline's daily occupation to visit her sister, and receive lessons of humility and piety from her; and the father saw with delight and gratitude to God that this his youngest darling profited by these lessons, and that her character daily became more established, and less liable to fluctuate and alter with the opinions of those among whom she might associate.

And now, as I have already been obliged to enter with considerable minuteness into many scenes of this narrative, and as I shall probably be compelled to be equally particular in relating some others which are to come, I shall notice somewhat more slightly certain events, with which it is necessary that I should briefly acquaint my readers.

After the marriage of Henrietta, which, although it proved to be so happy a one, did not meet with the approbation of the family at Stanbrook Court, more than two years passed away at the rectory with little change in the family circle. Emmeline was now fully grown, and was of so beautiful and engaging an appearance, that few young women in the neighbourhood could, in that respect, be compared with her, though she was not so calm, nor did she possess that self-command, which had always been so remarkable and admirable in her sister, and which was rather the effect of principle than of insensibility. Yet the feelings of Emmeline were now under considerable control; and though her countenance exhibited more frequent changes of expression than Henrietta's, still this expression was so chastened, so subdued, and so generally indicative of those sentiments which are most amiable, that by some persons her speaking features and eloquent blushes were thought to render her even more attractive than her sister had ever been.

The birth of a child to this beloved sister had awakened all her sensibilities, and afforded a sweet employment for all her hours of leisure.

In the mean time, the family were become so recon-

ciled to the kitchen, and had derived so much advantage to their circumstances, and experienced so great a freedom from care, through the addition to their income arising from Mrs. Alice Turner's residence in the house, that, although the time was drawing very near when Adolphus was to leave the University, Mr. Vaughén entertained no thoughts of disturbing his old lodger, or returning to his former mode of living. When speaking on this subject one day to his wife and daughter, he said, "When Adolphus leaves the University, we might, with care and economy, return to our parlour, and keep another servant; but minute care and rigid economy would be necessary, and we should still be poor in the parlour."

"Then, papa," said Emmeline, "if I may give my opinion, I should greatly prefer being rich in the kitchen."

"Well then, my dear," said Mr. Vaughén, "things shall remain as they are, if your mamma approves it: and I shall the more rejoice in this decision, because thereby peace and quietness will be insured to poor Mrs. Turner for some time to come, or perhaps, the Lord permitting, for the remainder of her life."

This decision being formed, the happy family prepared themselves, for the third time, to receive Adolphus and Theodore in their neat but unfashionable apartment for the long vacation: and this happy period having at length arrived, Emmeline again found herself supremely happy in the society of her brother and his friend, and enjoyed the pleasure of their company in her daily visits to her beloved Henrietta at her woodside farm.

It will now be necessary to mention a circumstance which had hitherto escaped the notice even of Mr. and Mrs. Vaughén, namely, a growing and deep-rooted attachment between Theodore and Emmeline, of which the young people themselves seemed hardly sensible, inasmuch as this regard had gradually changed from a kind of brotherly and sisterly affection into one of a more powerful nature.

As soon as Mr. Vaughén perceived this, he took alarm: not because he did not love Theodore, and would not have preferred him for a son-in-law above all others whom he knew; but he well knew that the parents of the young man were worldly people, and he feared that

the cause of much unhappiness might arise from this quarter. He also felt that he himself was to blame for want of foresight: "For how," said he, "could I have allowed two such pleasing young people habitually to associate together without anticipating what might happen!"

The sense of this carelessness grieved Mr. Vaughen, and led him to humble himself anew before the throne of grace; and at length he was brought to a conviction that he ought immediately to speak to Theodore, and persuade him to leave Emmeline, and seek no further to solicit her affection.

To give pain to those whom he loved was the most severe trial to which Mr. Vaughen could be exposed; nevertheless, he shrunk not from this duty, but took an early opportunity to open his mind to Theodore.

I shall not relate the conversation between Mr. Vaughen and Theodore at full length, but shall merely mention to my reader the principal topics on which he addressed him.

As the young man, when addressed by his beloved tutor on the subject, instantly acknowledged his regard for Emmeline, Mr. Vaughen represented to him, that her want of fortune and her humble education would certainly render her far from desirable as a daughter-in-law to his parents; and he proceeded to point out to him the strong duty of his submitting his will to theirs, and he urged him, as he valued the blessing of God, not to seek his own pleasure at the risk of displeasing them: and although Theodore argued and pleaded with all the warmth and eloquence of youth, yet Mr. Vaughen insisted, that he should immediately return to his parents, and that he should also entirely cease, for the present, from the use of any means of engaging the affection of his daughter.

Theodore declared, that he never should cease to think of Emmeline, and never could be happy without her.

"I will grant all this," said Mr. Vaughen, "not only for the sake of argument, but because I believe that the man who has once loved Emmeline would not be satisfied very readily to make any other choice: but still, my son, still I affirm, that your advantage and comfort will be more certainly insured by a simple and entire acqui-

escence in the divine will on this occasion, than by any attempt which you could make to control your own fortune, or form your own plans of happiness."

Mr. Vaughen then laboured to convince Theodore, that the sum of human wisdom consisted in a simple and entire resignation of the mind to the divine will, and in bringing our desires down to such things as we actually possess. And he pointed out to him the means by which such a state of submission and acquiescence might be obtained, even by sincere application to Him in whose hands are the hearts of all men.

It was a severe trial to poor Theodore to tear himself away from Emmeline, and to leave the peaceful and happy vicarage, in which he had spent so many delightful months, and even years, in order to become an inmate of his father's gay villa at Richmond, where every sentiment which he heard expressed was altogether in opposition to every thing which he had admired and loved in his tutor's house.

Emmeline shed, in secret, many tears at his departure; but, as he had not made any decided avowal of his attachment to her, she never seemed to suspect the occasion of his going, or to think that there was any thing extraordinary in his leaving the parsonage to visit his parents. Still, however, she retained the sweetest recollection of him, and often said, "When poor Theodore was here, we had many pleasant walks, and read many delightful books: I wish he could have stayed with us a little longer!"

About this period, an event took place which tended a little to divert the attention of the family from Theodore and Emmeline.—Captain John Vaughen, who had been absent during several years from England, or who, if his ship had touched in the port, had not found time to come home, suddenly appeared at Stanbrook Court, and informed his friends that he was come to spend some months with them.

The Squire was, in his way, as has already been seen, not insensible to the feelings of natural affection, and the old ladies possessed a considerable share of family attachment, though not of a character sufficiently strong to counteract and remove their prejudices and impressions concerning worldly propriety and etiquette. The

arrival, therefore, of the captain was a matter of great joy at Stanbrook Court, and, during the first evening, all was unmixed and noisy merriment; till the captain, who had repeatedly asked after his brother Henry's health, unfortunately put some further questions concerning him which so entirely disconcerted the old ladies, that they could not recover their placidity during the rest of the evening.

"I am ashamed," said Mrs. Dorothy Vaughen, "I am ashamed to talk to you about Henry, brother John. He was always, you know, a man of a singular way of thinking; and, lately, he has entirely lost himself, and quite banished himself from all good society."

"Ay!" said the captain: "I am sorry to hear it, very sorry. What can have been the matter?" and he looked from his sister at the head of the table, to his brother at the lower end, with such an expression of uneasiness and perplexity as seldom appeared in his weatherbeaten face. "Poor fellow! poor Harry!" he exclaimed, "what can he have done?"

The Squire drummed under the table, and drew up his mouth, determining that he would not for once speak upon a subject which had been a matter of continual debate between himself and his sisters: for the Squire maintained, that his brother had done perfectly right to live in a kitchen, if he had not wherewithal to support himself in a parlour; while his sisters averred, on the contrary, that no circumstances ought to have induced a Vaughen to submit to such a degradation.

As the Squire, therefore, would not speak, the ladies were obliged to tell the degrading tale of their brother's having for some years past sunk, together with his family, into the lowest life, residing with his servants in the kitchen, and obliging his daughters to perform some of the meanest offices of the household: neither did they finish their tale, till they had represented the whole family as being reduced to the lowest rank.

The captain listened with amazement, taking all that his sisters said for granted, and frequently interrupting their narrative with exclamations of, "Wonderful! surprising! such a man as Harry to be so fallen! the most gentlemanly man of the family, as he was always considered, begging your pardon, Squire! such a lively man,

too, so fond as he was of refined company! Well, this is incredible! But I must go over to-morrow, and see him. Perhaps his purse is low; perhaps he wants help of that kind."

The sisters took alarm at this hint of the captain's, and would have dissuaded him from going over to the parsonage, "where," said they, "you will not meet with a reception fit for a gentleman."

But the captain rejected this idea with a smile, saying, "And what kind of a sailor must I be, if I cannot put up with a sorry berth for a few hours, especially for the sake of enjoying the company of a brother whom I have not seen for so many years?"

"Well, but, brother John," said the sisters, "will you persuade him to forsake these disgraceful whims, this low life? Do advise him to leave his kitchen, and to bring up his only remaining daughter like a gentleman's. As to the elder, she is quite ruined—sacrificed to some low man, and sunk beyond recovery."

The countenance of the captain fell again, as he heard these changes rung upon the words "low life, ruin, sacrifices," &c. &c. and he promised his sisters that he would do what he could to persuade his brother to resume his character as a gentleman, and to restore his family to their proper rank in society.

The next morning, he, accordingly, took his departure immediately after breakfast; and, as he had as strong an antipathy to a horse as most other gentlemen of his profession, he made his way over the country to the rectory on foot, anticipating, as he went along, the sordid scenes he was to witness in his brother's house: he was struck, however, on entering the garden-gate, to see the little shrubbery perfectly neat, and the parterres blooming and fragrant with roses, jessamine, and other odoriferous plants.

He approached the house, and, knocking at the front door, it was presently opened to him by the ancient domestic, whose face he instantly recognized, and whose exclamation of joy, and loud repetition of his name, brought out all his relations from their different apartments, presenting such a group as instantly changed all the melancholy fancies of the captain into visions of Eden: for whereas middle age appeared in its most ami-

able form in the persons of Mr. and Mrs. Vaughen, blooming youth and beauty could scarcely be better represented than by Adolphus and Emmeline, by whom the captain was conducted into the sitting-room of the family, (the unfashionable denomination of which we would willingly sometimes avoid, in respect to our more courtly readers,) and made welcome with a sincerity and affection which for a moment quite overcame the man who had been so long absent from his country and family.

"Well, but," said the captain, after he had answered some of the many questions that were put to him by his brother, "I understood that I was to see something here which was to shock even my coarse nerves? Why, brother, how is this? You have got a very bad name in the country! What have you been doing? And your children, too!—they say that you have made a kitchen-maid of your daughter! Well, it may be so: but if all kitchen-maids were like this," he said, looking towards Emmeline, "I can guess which end of most houses would in general be thought most agreeable."

Mr. Vaughen replied, "Brother, I have done what I thought best in the situation in which I was placed: we were compelled to lower our habits, and reduce our establishment; but perhaps this very circumstance, under the divine blessing, made us more careful in attending to our manners and the cultivation of our minds."

This speech of Mr. Vaughen was followed by an offer of money from the captain, which Mr. Vaughen would by no means accept, assuring his brother that he had been rich ever since he had lived in the kitchen; and he added, that he had brought down his habits to his circumstances, as the best means of preventing himself from incurring the constant guilt of breaking the tenth commandment: "for," said he, "wherever there is a continued pressure of want, how difficult is it to refrain from coveting our neighbours' goods!"

Another turn was then given to the conversation, and Mr. Vaughen endeavoured to lead his brother's mind to the contemplation of religious subjects, for he saw and deeply deplored his ignorance in that respect; and, with a view, if the Lord pleased, to benefit him in this particular, he pressed him not only to dinner, but to remain

in his house as long as he liked, that is, if he could put up with the inconveniences of his mode of life.

It is certain, that persons who have been used to travelling, and who have seen much of men and manners in foreign countries, however elegant they themselves may be in their own deportment, are not so wedded to particular forms, habits, and modes of living, as those individuals who have never left their native country; and the narrower a man's sphere of observation has been, the more stress will he lay on such minutiae as perhaps have utterly escaped the observation of those who have taken a more extended view of life. So it was with Captain Vaughen: in the enjoyment of his brother's society, and in the kind attentions of his brother's family, he presently quite forgot the room in which he was sitting; and though when the old servant made up the fire after dinner, and put the kettle on for tea, his eyes were fixed on her with a stedfastness which made Mrs. Vaughen rather nervous, yet, had he at the moment been asked what he was looking at, it would probably have occasioned him some reflection before he could reply.

But this easiness or carelessness about trifles which we often see in travellers and foreigners, is what the English in general cannot understand, and perhaps nothing more annoys an Englishman, when returning, after a long absence, to his native country, than the necessity in which he finds himself of attending to a countless number of etceteras, the importance of which he cannot be made to feel. But it may well be hoped, that, when true religion universally prevails in this country, its inhabitants will cease to be occupied by this infinite variety of nothings by which their attention is for the most part monopolized.

But whether it was in consequence of the Captain's ease on these minor points, or that his brother Henry's house abounded in comforts which he found nowhere else, certain it is, that, after a short residence at Stanbrook Court, he returned to the rectory, and, taking up his abode in the spare room left by poor Theodore, he made his brother's house his head-quarters, and said that he hoped he should not be obliged to change them while he remained in England.

Soon after the arrival of the captain, Adolphus was ordained; and, as he was so happy as to get a curacy close to his father's habitation, he was enabled still to live at home, and daily to visit and instruct his people, which duty he performed in simplicity and Christian sincerity.

This circumstance afforded great comfort to the parents and sisters of the young man, especially to Emmeline, who sometimes still wondered that so little was heard of Theodore, and that he so seldom wrote to any of the family.

And now, having described the situation of Mr. Vaughen's family, and spoken of their numerous comforts, we will turn to poor Theodore, whom we dismissed in a very disconsolate mood, fearing that he should never be happy again as long as he lived; and we will take up his history from the time when he left the rectory and became an inmate of his father's house.

Mr. Owen, Theodore's father, was a counsellor and a member of parliament. He had, therefore, been in the habit of associating with persons of consequence and distinction in the kingdom; and his children, of whom he had many, had all, with the exception of Theodore, been brought up with the idea that riches and honour were necessary to their well-being in society, and that they must acquire these by their own exertions.

Through the divine mercy, Theodore had been preserved from this vicious mode of instruction, by the interference of an uncle, his godfather, who, being himself a clergyman, and an old bachelor, promised to undertake the expence of his education, provided that his education was to be conducted according to his views, which were decidedly Christian. This uncle had been dead only a few months before his nephew returned to Richmond, and, when dying, he had left Theodore two thousand pounds, upon the possession of which he was not to enter till he had attained priest's orders.

As Mr. Owen had but little fortune to leave his children, although he had brought them up with habits and notions equal to the highest expectations, it will not occasion much surprise in my readers, when I say that the legacy left to Theodore was an occasion of bitter envy among his brothers and sisters, who earnestly coveted

this money, blaming their uncle for partiality, and expressing the most eager and unrestrained desires for some such bequest from others of their relations in their own favour; being, in consequence, induced to look forward with impatience and anxiety to the deaths of those elderly persons in the family from whom they entertained the slightest expectation.

While the minds of the young people of the family were in this state of irritation, Theodore arrived, and was received by his brothers and sisters with a coldness which added to the dejection of his mind, though he attributed this coldness rather to the dissimilarity of their educations and former modes of life than to any decided feelings of envy or dislike; for, as he had himself thought little of his uncle's bequest, excepting as it afforded a proof of that good man's regard, he had no idea of the feelings which it had excited in the breasts of his family. Neither did Theodore derive more satisfaction from the society of his parents than from the presence of his brothers and sisters. His father was cold-hearted and had his mind full of the world; he spent few hours at home, excepting at his meals, and on these occasions it usually happened that, at least, some one or other of his youngest son's opinions or sentiments, most of which had been imbibed from Mr. Vaughen, was brought forward for the ridicule of the younger part of the family and the grave discussion of the elder.

At these times, both Theodore and his views were determinately opposed by his father, contemptuously censured by his mother, and condemned to run the gauntlet of all the fine ladies his sisters, and the men of the world his brothers. Nor was it possible for him, either by silence or other means, to escape these attacks: for whatever might be the subject of conversation, his brothers and sisters always contrived to make such a reference to him as might call forth his sentiments in opposition to those of the rest of the family, and they did this in such a manner, as generally to represent his views as utterly ridiculous; and because Theodore maintained that it was the duty of every Christian to bring his desires down to his circumstances, and rather to seek to make the best use of that which he actually possessed, than to be eager to obtain more, he was accounted by the

whole family as but little better than a fool; and his mother not unfrequently said, when she was under the irritation of these occasions, that she wished his wise uncle had let him alone, for if he had laid out as much as three thousand pounds upon him, he had made him at least three thousand pounds the worse for it.

Such being the young man's condition in the family, it will not be wondered at that he rejoiced at the termination of the long vacation; although he could not look forward to the enjoyment of his friend Adolphus's society for the ensuing few months, which were the last that he himself had to spend at Cambridge.

As he was about to take his degree immediately after the Christmas vacation, he was excused from visiting Richinond at that season; but as his business at the University was completed before the long vacation, he was obliged to make up his mind to return home before that period, and to remain there until the time should arrive for his ordination, which was to take place in the autumn.

During this period Theodore had never ceased to think of the lovely Emmeline, but it was with that submission of his mind to the divine will which the most correct principles of religion inculcate: and thus, this affection, so far from tending to unsettle him, had, at once, the effect of strengthening and ennobling his mind, and preserving his heart from the dangerous influences of worldly and unholy females.

When Theodore arrived at Richmond on the commencement of the long vacation, he found the family in high glee, his elder brother being on the eve of marriage with one of two coheiresses, daughters of a city banker, and women of the first ton.

This marriage was regarded as a great thing for the family, and nothing but amusements and large dinners, parties on the water, little dances in the family, and visits to Ranelagh, and other places of summer resort, occupied the minds of the young people.

During these scenes of gaiety, Theodore, for some time, escaped, not only from ridicule, but even, as he hoped, from notice; although he not unfrequently joined such of the family parties as he considered not unbecoming the sacred character which he was about to assume.

But suddenly he found himself brought forward into notice, particularly by his father, his mother, and his eldest sister: and whereas these individuals, if they had ever condescended to regard him at all, had treated him no otherwise than as a well-meaning creature who was not altogether right in his head, they now took every possible occasion to do him public honour, and to pay the highest apparent deference to his opinion. Mrs. Owen, especially, became, all at once, so fond of his company that she would not stir without her dear Theodore; and in every party of pleasure at which she was present, she declared that she had no comfort without the arm of this her beloved son. Theodore was too simple and unpractised in deception to conceive of any reason but, what appeared to him, the most natural one for this change, namely, that his parents through often seeing him began to love him better; and he accordingly met their advances with the utmost respect and cordiality.

In the mean time, the marriage of the elder brother took place, and the new-married couple immediately repaired to Brighton, accompanied by the younger Miss Owen, who was a year older than Theodore; while the bride's sister, Miss Caroline Clayton, remained at Richmond with Mr. and Mrs. Owen.

It was now that the late change in Mr. and Mrs. Owen's conduct was accounted for, and Theodore was informed by his father, that there was good reason for concluding, that, if he would conduct himself prudently, it was possible, from certain hints which had fallen from the young lady, that he might obtain the unmarried coheiress, and thus share the great fortune with his brother.

The manner in which Theodore received this information was such, as enabled his father instantly to discover the state of his affections, on which, he immediately charged him with having bestowed them without consulting his parents' inclinations.

Had Theodore attempted to dissemble he would not have been able to succeed; but he had no wish of the kind, on the contrary, he rather rejoiced in an opportunity of entirely opening his heart, and he, therefore, related the whole history of the progress of his regard for Emmeline, of the undesigning and unsuspecting charac-

ter of the young lady, and the honourable conduct of her father.

It was impossible for Mr. Owen to blame Mr. Vaughen, but he was extremely irritated and angry with his son, and told him, that, as he was not bound by any promise to Miss Vaughen, he insisted, as he valued his blessing, upon his not rejecting the high fortune now offered to him.

Theodore was silent: upon which his father began to argue with him, alleging a variety of apparent inducements, to prevail on him to adopt the mode of conduct which he desired. He first pointed out the perishable nature of that feeling which the world calls love, and he assured him that it would be instantly extinguished by poverty: "whereas," added he, "the comforts arising from a large fortune are as lasting as life itself." He concluded by painting in the most formidable colours all the dreadful consequences of want of money, namely, duns, creditors, matrimonial jangles, mean shifts, loss of honour, and universal contempt.

Theodore replied, that he had never seen any thing of this kind under Mr. Vaughen's roof, although the income of that gentleman was so narrow that he had been obliged to give up a servant and to let a part of his house: "But never, Sir, never," added Theodore, with earnestness, did I witness so much peace in any family as in Mr. Vaughen's, or such entire freedom from worldly care, or so much true elegance and ease of mind."

"There is an old saying," said the counsellor, with a kind of sneering laugh, "that love is blind: the story is as old as the heathen mythology."

"But, Sir," said Theodore, "is it not possible for one man to be rich with a small income, and another man to be poor with a very princely one? Does not this great metropolis furnish daily instances of this latter character? And I have often heard Mr. Vaughen remark, that poverty is not so much the effect of want of money, especially among persons in the middle ranks of life, as of want of humility and moderation: for if every necessary and comfort of life for a family may be purchased with one hundred pounds a year, what is to make the possessor of that one hundred pounds poor, excepting that he has not courage to accommodate his modes

of life to his circumstances, and that he is determined to live according to some specified plan which either he or his neighbours had laid down as necessary for him?"

This remark of Theodore's was followed by a burst of contempt and anger from his father, who, using the same strain of sarcasm which Theodore had improperly begun, represented the sentiments which his son had expressed, in so many ridiculous points of view, that the young man, though not convinced, was utterly confounded, and was glad to be saved from further ridicule by the entrance of a gentleman on business which could not be postponed. But Theodore only escaped from his father to encounter a repetition of the same arguments from his mother, who, with the assistance of his sister, left no means untried to persuade him to marry a lady who had little to recommend her but a dashing air and an immense fortune. The heads of the assertions, we will not call them arguments, urged by these ladies were as follows:—It is necessary for persons born in a certain rank of life to live in a certain way. The ladies of course considered this proposition as self-evident, inasmuch as they took no pains whatever to prove its truth.—Every person who begins life with a small income must inevitably run into debt, and be subject to all the horrors of duns, debts, and miserable resources.—A poor man must in consequence be a mean man, and of course will be despised by all the world and become the shame of his own family.

Theodore in this place ventured to assert that a man might have but a small income and yet not be distressed by poverty: a remark which was received with the utmost contempt by the ladies, and set down to the young man's want of experience.

The ladies next asserted that it was absolutely impossible but that persons living in a humble manner must necessarily be mean, vulgar, and low, and unfit altogether for refined society. And they concluded by declaring that matches arising out of affection only, without a view to prudence, were seldom happy, these schemes being more suited for Arcadian scenery than for real life.

It was only in vain that Theodore brought forward some of Mr. Vaughen's best arguments to prove that poverty, shame, and disgrace, did not proceed so much

from the want of money as from the want of prudence and firmness, in not previously modelling the mode of life in accommodation to the income, and then steadily adhering to the previous arrangements. By these arguments he only inflamed the anger of his mother and excited the contempt of his sister, and Mrs. Owen concluded her remarks by telling him, that, unless he submitted his inclination to that of his father in the case in point, he would certainly incur his highest resentment; and that if he chose to live like a tinker when settled in life, he must not calculate upon the notice and countenance of his family.

Theodore's feelings on this occasion were, no doubt, very painful, but he was a Christian, and he, therefore, considered that the persons with whom he had to deal were those to whom he owed the most solemn duties. He accordingly retired to his own apartment, and, after some time spent before the throne of grace, he wrote a respectful and dutiful letter to his parents, promising, that if they would excuse his engaging in a connexion on which he could not think without the utmost reluctance, he would patiently wait their acquiescence to that union, which, he felt assured, would, if sanctioned by them, constitute the happiness of his life.

When this letter was received, the parents, judging that they might perhaps succeed better in their ambitious project by not pressing the matter further at present, affected to be satisfied, and contented themselves with holding out just so much encouragement to the young lady as might keep alive her regard for Theodore: for certain it was that she had conceived a liking for him, and allowed this fancy to be made known to the parents, a mode of conduct, however, which few circumstances can justify in a female.

In the mean time, the period arrived for Theodore's ordination, after which he gladly retired to a small curacy, which he had obtained, in one of the richest but most sequestered parishes in the beautiful county of Kent. There, surrounded by orchards and hop-yards, he could almost fancy himself again in Herefordshire; and although he had not the sweet society that he had there enjoyed, yet was he not backward in cherishing gratitude for his retreat from worldly society, and for the

opportunity now afforded him of communion with his God, and of pursuing those studies that are particularly necessary for one whose business it was to become the instructor of others. The salary which Theodore was to receive from his curacy was fifty pounds a year, to which income his father promised to add another, which, together with the interest of his legacy, made up one hundred and fifty pounds per annum. With this income, at that time, the young man might have lived handsomely, have dressed well, have paid for the best lodging that the village would afford, and, perhaps, have kept a horse: but it had pleased God to inspire him with other views in laying out his money than those ordinary and selfish ones which are indulged by the natural man. He resolved as soon as he entered upon his curacy to establish himself at a rate of expenditure considerably below his income, and to devote what he thereby saved to charitable purposes. With this intention, he hired two apartments in an old farmhouse, a parlour and a bed-chamber, and he engaged the old lady of the house and her maid to attend upon him. His parlour was large and duly furnished with two corner-cupboards painted blue, with a corner fireplace, over which he hung a fine old print of the crucifixion, and with a large casement window which commanded a prospect of an orchard, a hay-rick, and cow-house, and, through an opening of the trees, a view of a black-and-white cottage standing at the corner of a hop-yard, and a distant eminence crowned with trees.

When Theodore engaged this quiet apartment, which he thought delightful, it never once occurred to him that the approach to it was through the large old-fashioned kitchen which was occupied by the family, that the tables were of oak and the chairs of walnut, that corner-cupboards were vulgar things, especially when painted blue, and that his new mahogany book-case with glass doors, which was a present from an old aunt, put all the rest of the furniture entirely out of countenance.

Notwithstanding these inauspicious circumstances, the young minister found himself more comfortable in his uncouth parlour than he had been for many months, and, soon after he was settled in his new abode, his happiness was inexpressibly increased by a visit from

Adolphus, who arrived, according to a long-standing agreement, in order to assist and advise him on his first setting out in his professional career.

And now, were it to my present purpose, I could say much respecting the sweet counsel which these two young men took together, how they ordered and improved their time, how they exhorted each other to a simple and holy life, and how the elder pressed the younger to an earnest and unwearied discharge of his duties as a minister.

As Adolphus could so manage matters as to continue with Theodore one entire month, he accompanied him on his first visits to his parishioners; after which, they divided the parish into districts, one of which Theodore purposed to visit daily in order to administer spiritual supplies to all and temporal assistance to those that needed.

This visit of Adolphus was exceedingly serviceable to Theodore, and though the young men suffered a great deal from the separation which followed, yet Theodore felt himself much strengthened and confirmed by the timely assistance of his brother, and after his departure he pursued with the strictest regularity the plans which they had mutually formed.

While together, the young men had refrained from speaking much of Emmeline; the one from brotherly delicacy, and the other from a sense of honour: but Theodore had ventured to send her a short note by her brother, and a little drawing of the view from his parlour window, both of which were highly prized by her and placed carefully among her treasures.

It is certain that those who humbly acquiesce in the will of God, and who are enabled to do their duty in that state of life in which it hath pleased the Lord to place them, will enjoy great peace though amidst circumstances of much bereavement of external comfort; and thus it was with Theodore: though separated from all those persons whom he loved best on earth, and doubting whether he might ever be restored to his Emmeline, yet he enjoyed such happiness in his little curacy as the beloved of the Lord alone experience. One day passed with him much as another, in one continued round of cheerful duties: he arose at six, breakfasted

early, and studied divinity till one, at this hour he dined, and then walked out to see his people and visit a school which he had established, he returned to tea at five, and read till eight, at which time he had family worship in the kitchen with all the farmer's servants, and at nine the whole family retired to rest.

As the spring and summer advanced, he derived additional pleasure from the new beauties which adorned his walks, and he often declared that he believed no region throughout the kingdom possessed such a rich variety of hill and dale, coppice, brook, waterfall, dingle, lawn, and upland, as was to be found within his little parish.

Theodore had now been more than seven months at his curacy, and had never once desired to leave his charge, when one day, after having spent a peaceful morning and taken his early dinner, he went out to walk, as usual, to call on a poor widow who appeared to be near her end, and whose residence lay in a beautiful dingle at some distance from his habitation. She had lately occupied much of his thoughts and time, and he was returning full of joy because he thought he had discerned a saving work begun in her heart, when he was startled at the unusual sight of a post-chaise in the farm-yard, and being instantly accosted by his father's servant out of livery, he was informed that his mother and sister were actually in the house.

Theodore tried to feel and look pleased when he received this information, and, without asking himself whether he really were so, he hastened in and ran to receive the embraces of his mother.

After the first salutations were over and the family party had taken their seats near the window, Theodore asked his mother whether she had dined, and whether he should order a mutton-chop or the tea-things.

"Neither," she replied, "on our account; we can do very well till your dinner is ready."

"My dinner!" said Theodore, smiling. "I have dined at least these four hours."

"Dined!" said Mrs. Owen; "what, at one o'clock?"

Theodore now recollects for the first time the extreme inclemency of such a custom, and stammering out some

apology, said, "Had I expected you, Madam, I would certainly have waited."

"Me! my dear," said Mrs. Owen; "you could not expect me, and therefore I am of course out of the question; but for your own comfort I wonder you should adopt such uncouth and extraordinary habits."

"It is always the same to me," said Theodore, "when I eat, but you must not suffer for my whims," and he immediately rang, and called for what the house would afford; and while his respectable hostess was bustling to get all things ready, he made many enquiries about his father, brothers, and sisters.

"Your father is well," said his mother, coldly, "but he is not in good spirits."

Theodore was going to ask if he had any particular cause for uneasiness, but was interrupted by Miss Bell, who said, "Theodore, I have been admiring your cupboards; they are the very pink of elegance."

Theodore looked round him as if to find out something new; and then, smiling, said, "Why, at any rate, sister, they are suitable to the rest of the apartment; you will at least allow that?"

"To be sure," said Miss Bell; "no one will dispute that point. You certainly have chosen a most elegant residence."

The necessity of a reply to this remark was precluded by the entrance of the mistress of the house, who, to do honour to her guests, came in with her servant-maid, a red-armed country girl, to prepare the table and set on such food as she had ready.

Theodore, pleased by her condescension and endeavours to set things off for the best, thought it right to speak on the subject, and said, "Mrs. Simpson, do not give yourself the trouble."

The old lady declared it was not a trouble but a pleasure to wait on any friend of Mr. Owen's. Notwithstanding this hint, the two ladies from London took no notice of the courtesy of the country dame, but as soon as she was gone out, the elder of the two remarked that there was a decent looking village in the parish through which they had passed, and added, that she supposed it would afford something more respectable in the way of a lodging than the one that her son now occupied.

"O, mamma," said Miss Bell, "but you forget Theodore's taste, and the high relish he professes for low life."

"Well, sister," returned Theodore, somewhat hastily, "will you eat? perhaps you may find my food better than my lodgings."

While Mrs. Owen and her daughter were partaking of the plain but excellent fare set before them, Theodore had leisure to contemplate the expression of his mother's countenance, in which he feared that he read some expression of vexation.

Mrs. Owen had been a handsome woman; and still, with the assistance of a well-chosen dress, a fashionable air, and a slight tincture of artificial colour in her cheeks, she passed for a fine woman in the gay world. Her manner in society was lively, and she knew how to assume those smiles and that expression of countenance which convey the idea of a person's being pleased with their company; but when off her guard, her features returned to their natural expression, which was that of discontent, disappointment, and anxiety: and at this time, though evidently endeavouring to conceal her feelings, she was extremely dissatisfied and disconcerted at the situation in which she found her son, and it was with difficulty that she restrained her emotions within those bounds, in which it was necessary to confine them, in order to promote the end that she had in view by her visit, which was, if possible, to discover the state of her son's affection, and to find out whether there was any prospect of accomplishing the family views, which were to effect a marriage between him and Miss Caroline Clayton.

It is extremely difficult, and almost impossible, for persons who are very nearly connected and whose views are entirely at variance, to associate with each other even for a few hours without falling into argument, however great may be the forbearance on the one side and the desire to please on the other. Accordingly, this danger was felt in a very strong degree, during the remainder of the evening, both by the mother and son, and the restraint under which each of them laboured was so great, that they frequently made efforts to converse, and as often relapsed into silence; for every subject on which

they entered seemed, to the mind of one or the other, connected with some point which might lead to dispute; and at length the effort to converse became so painful that they both fairly gave up the attempt, leaving all the talk to Miss Bell, who amused herself with ridiculing all that she saw in and about her brother's lodgings.

"And how long, Theodore," said she, "have you deemed a hay-stack and a cow-house such very agreeable objects? though, I believe, these things are considered more picturesque than a well-plastered house with sash-windows, and an elegant carriage at the door; and, perhaps," added she, "according to the new rage for the picturesque, a kitchen-maid with her cap on one side and a coloured apron would be a better subject for a painter, than an elegant lady in the precincts of St. James's."

"Go on, sister," said Theodore, "I love to hear you talk."

Arabella presently remarked, that there was something very venerable in oak tables and corner fire-places: "There is nothing," said she, "in these indicative of a new family or of the upstart."

As the young lady soon, however, perceived that she failed to provoke her brother by these remarks, which he felt as in no way concerning himself, for he was only a lodger, as he observed, she became more personal, and told him that his coat was threadbare and that his hair wanted cutting, and proceeded from one thing to another till the young gentleman, calling for tea and candles, walked out into the kitchen to officiate at the family devotions, and left the young lady to recollect herself.

Thus passed this disagreeable evening, till the ladies retired to rest in Theodore's own apartment, which he gave up for the occasion.

In the morning Theodore was down some time before his visitors, and found his little breakfast-table set out with his landlady's best china, and with such a supply of white and brown bread, cream, and grass butter, as again called forth some expressions of thanks for these kind attentions: and as his mother and sister did not yet appear, he sat down to his usual studies, hoping that he should meet his friends with a better temper after a good night's rest. But in this particular he was disappointed,

for his mother had commanded her temper during the preceding evening in order to feel her way previous to the commencement of a grand attack which she meant to make in the morning.

Accordingly, after a sullen meal taken somewhat in haste, Mrs. Owen began to open her mind to her son, and plainly told him all that she disapproved of in his conduct. She began her discourse by informing him, that his father was very low, and that he was the cause of his uneasiness. "We much regret, Theodore," she said, "that we allowed your uncle to interfere with respect to your education, and to insist upon your continuing so long with Mr. Vaughen, in whose family you have acquired a taste so decidedly low that the two thousand pounds which your uncle has left you will never make up for the injury that he has done you by educating you among persons of mean inclinations and habits."

Here the lady paused, and Theodore continued silent, while she thus proceeded.

"An elegant young woman of large fortune and amiable disposition offers you her hand and her heart; she is approved by your parents, and loved by your sisters; but you obstinately and perseveringly reject her, and that, because you pretend already to have bestowed your affections on a person without fortune, unknown to fashion, of low habits, and one utterly disapproved of by your parents; and you affect, moreover, a singularity in your own dress, and manners, and views, which renders you totally unfit for the society of your brothers and sisters, who are elegant and fashionable young people."

Theodore was still silent, though his mother stopped purposely to allow him to speak, upon which she resumed her discourse with increased heat, and told him that she was now come expressly to try what might be done with him, as his father had resolved to renounce him if he did not determine immediately to comply with his will.

Theodore coloured on hearing this, and rejoined, "My father probably remembers the promise that I made to him in writing before I left Richmond, and by that I am willing to abide."

On this his sister flamed out, but his mother pretended to be melted into tears.

Theodore had a tender heart, and his mother's tears, or seeming tears, affected him much: he, however, continued firm, and particularly stated and explained to her the motives by which he desired to be actuated throughout life. "I am," said he, "the minister of a religion which teaches me to renounce the world, and to take up my cross daily; a religion which requires of its votaries to desire no honour but that which cometh from God, and to bestow whatever property I might be able to spare from my own necessities to supply the wants of the poor. From principle, therefore, I trust, and not from caprice, have I chosen this humble but pleasant apartment; and I wear this coat, which my sister says is threadbare, in order that I may provide a coat for him who wants one. I wish, indeed, to avoid every thing that is mean or sordid; but I am well convinced, that the minister whose heart is devoted to vain desires, and who covets the honours, riches, or pleasures of this world, cannot be truly dedicated to the service of his God. I love Emmeline, it is true, and I admire above all things the humility and Christian simplicity in which she has been educated: but, were there not such a person existing as Emmeline, I solemnly declare, that, with my present views, I never could consent to marry a gay, expensive, fashionable woman, such as Miss Caroline Clayton."

As Mrs. Owen could not understand the motives of her son's conduct, her anger was rather increased than allayed by this statement of his views and sentiments; and she shewed her displeasure by ordering the chaise, and taking her departure with her daughter, saying, as she stepped into the carriage, "I am therefore to tell your father that you are determined to abide by your letter?"

"Tell him," said Theodore, "every thing that is affectionate and dutiful on my part; but entreat him not to press this one point."

"That is as much as to say," remarked Arabella, "that you will oblige your father whenever it suits you so to do, and have your own way when it does not."

Thus the relations parted: but by this short visit the peace of poor Theodore was for a time so much disturbed, that his vivacity forsook him, his cheeks became pale, and he lost his appetite; and, notwithstanding the care

of his good landlady, it was evident to all who saw the young man that his health was gradually declining, although the cause was not known to any one in the neighbourhood. Theodore, however, still continued to commit his way into the hand of his heavenly Master, and he was enabled religiously to adhere to the promise which he had made to Mr. Vaughen of not seeking by any means, either open or covert, to solicit the affections of Emmeline.

In the interim, among his friends, many things were working in his favour: one was, that some persons of distinction from Town, who had been visiting at Sir Thomas Freeman's, came back and brought such a report of the lovely appearance and interesting manners of Emmeline, as greatly tended to remove the prejudices of Mr. and Mrs. Owen against her; and at the same time their elder son confessed to his parents, what they had before suspected, that his happiness was destroyed by the violent temper of his wife, as he feared his estate would be by her excessive extravagance.

These circumstances made them look the more closely into the character of the other sister; and they now perceived in her conduct improprieties which they had never before either noticed or suspected. But perhaps even these would not have been sufficient to intimidate them from the pursuit of her money, had not she herself brought the matter to a speedy issue by running off with a gentleman whom she had seen but three times before; thus proving that her regard for Theodore was a whim of short duration, and one that she had for some time ceased to indulge.

While Mr. and Mrs. Owen were under the influence of the various feelings excited by these circumstances which I have just related, news was brought to them, through a medical man in Kent, of the distressing state of Theodore's health; and the parents were suddenly made to feel, by Him in whose hands are the hearts of all men, that they were sacrificing the health, and perhaps the life, of an excellent son to their ambitious feelings. They accordingly sent for him up to Town, assuring him that they would never press him to enter into any alliance contrary to his own feelings, and also informing him that they should not refuse their consent to the connexion

that he desired whenever circumstances might render such a measure prudent.

Notwithstanding the joy that was conveyed to the heart of Theodore by this letter, still, when he arrived in Town, he looked so ill, that his parents were excessively alarmed; and, as his illness continued, they at length made the circumstance known to Mr. Vaughen, whom Theodore had often expressed a strong desire to see, and they accordingly requested the good man to visit Richmond.

Mr. Vaughen instantly complied with the request, and was in the arms of his beloved pupil in the shortest time possible after the receipt of the letter.

On the arrival of Mr. Vaughen, Theodore revived a little; but, again relapsing, the physician advised that he should go into the country, and the young man pleaded hard to be permitted to accompany his tutor into Herefordshire.

"Ah, Theodore," said Mr. Vaughen, "what would be more delightful! But my house must be interdicted to you, for reasons that you but too well understand."

"I will not ask to accompany you then," said Theodore, "without the approbation of my parents."

"And unless," said Mr. Vaughen, "they will be content to abide the issue of this proposed visit into Herefordshire."

Theodore pleaded the cause with his parents, and obtained their consent; at which my reader might perhaps be surprised, were I not to mention, that Mr. Owen had lately heard some rumours respecting Captain Vaughen and his intentions towards his nieces: for the captain had, within the few last months, relinquished his official engagements, and returned to the rectory. The happy Theodore was, accordingly, put into a post-chaise, with his beloved tutor, in order that he might proceed by easy stages into Herefordshire.

When out of the atmosphere of the fashionable world, and beyond the paralyzing influence of worldly persons, the young minister seemed to breathe again, and his languid eye began to beam anew with hope and pleasure. How greatly did he enjoy the first evening that he spent on the road with Mr. Vaughen! and his paternal friend was more than once obliged to call him to order, such was the buoyancy and even playfulness of his spirit.

On the third day, in the evening, they drew near to their desired haven; and since poor Mrs. Vaughen had become an inmate of her kitchen, she had never so thoroughly relished the sound of an approaching carriage as she did at the moment when the rattling wheels of the post-chaise which contained Mr. Vaughen and Theodore were heard at a distance through the stillness of the night, and became every instant more loud, till, the vehicle having entered the gate, was the next moment at the door of the house.

"O how comfortable does that fireside appear!" said Mr. Vaughen, as he looked through the window of the sitting-room. "Be it kitchen, or be it parlour, it matters little, does it, Theodore? It is all delightful in my eyes."

Theodore could not speak, but he pressed Mr. Vaughen's hand, and at the same moment the carriage stopped; and the door of the house being burst open, such a group appeared within as made Theodore scarcely able to keep his seat till the carriage door could be opened. Amid the foremost was Adolphus, who hastened down the steps to the carriage. Behind him, though rather in a retreating attitude, stood the lovely Emmeline, with her whole face in a glow of delight, as appeared by the light of a candle, that happened to be held near her by nurse. Mrs. Vaughen and Henrietta stood near Emmeline, and uncle John and Mr. Etherington filled up the back-ground.

As Theodore sprang from the carriage, either from excessive joy or fatigue, his head became giddy, and his steps faltered. Adolphus was ready to support him. His weakness, however, was but momentary, yet it terrified Mrs. Vaughen and her daughters, and Emmeline especially, who burst into tears. "O my Emmeline!" said Theodore, "why those tears? I am much better than I have been, but I was overcome by joy and gratitude. Yes," he said, looking round on all the dear party, "gratitude for my present happiness: to be thus restored to all, all I love, it is too much!"

"Come, come," said Mr. Vaughen, "no more of this. My sons, you will look to the worldly goods that we have brought with us, and you, my good nurse, must supply us with refreshments." So saying, he proceeded triumphantly into that same renowned apartment of which

so much has already been said; and when he saw all his family once again gathered round him, he exclaimed, "I don't know how it is, but I believe, my Emmeline, that you have infected me with your folly; for I really feel as if I should be glad to do as ladies do when they are happy, and have a hearty fit of weeping. Rich in the kitchen!" said the good man, looking round him; "yes, I am rich in the kitchen: never was a richer man! May the Almighty grant that I may be a grateful man! yes, my children, that I may be grateful, and that you may be grateful, and ever ready to praise and bless your God for every mercy."

All the company present were affected by these expressions of the father's cheerful and pious feelings. Emmeline wept again; and Theodore took her hand, and endeavoured to speak, but was not able. The captain uttered a kind of groan, which he tried to turn into a cough; Mrs. Vaughen wiped her eyes; and Henrietta took her father's hand, and pressed it to her lips. The bustlings of nurse, and the entrance of Adolphus and Mr. Etherington, who had dismissed the postillion, were no unpleasant interruptions to the highly-wrought state of the feelings of the party gathered round the fire: and, before the hunger of the travellers was satisfied, composure was restored to every countenance, and a serene and tranquil sense of happiness filled every breast.

In this delightful situation, and under the kind care of Mrs. Vaughen, Emmeline, and nurse, Theodore, with the blessing of Providence, presently recovered his health, and was enabled to enjoy all the charms of the opening spring in the society of her whom he had so long and so faithfully loved.

Theodore returned in the summer to his curacy, and remained there till he obtained priest's orders, at which time he went back into Herefordshire to demand the hand of Emmeline.

"And pray," said the captain, who by this time had made up his mind to live with his brother during the remainder of his life, "and pray, young man, how do you mean to support your wife?"

"I have a hundred a year of my own," said Theodore, "and my father promises to give me another: I have also a curacy."

"And I suppose," said the captain, "you expect something from me?"

"No, Sir," replied Theodore, "nothing but your regard and best wishes."

"Well," said the captain, "I will be better, then, than you expect;" and he immediately produced a deed of gift by which he presented each of his brother Henry's children with two thousand pounds, not forgetting his niece at the farm, who by this time was become the happy mother of two fine children.

Mrs. Alice Turner had for some months past grown so infirm as to be entirely confined to her apartment. On this occasion, Mr. Vaughen provided her with a sofa and table in her bed-room; and, feeling that his circumstances were now entirely restored, he added some new furniture to his parlour, papered and painted it, and proposed that it should be taken possession of and re-entered on Emmeline's wedding-day.

On this delightful occasion, while all the family were sitting at breakfast, after the performance of the interesting ceremony, the happy father thus addressed his children:—"My dear children," he said, "it is now four years, since, finding my circumstances disordered, and my income not equal to the answering of my demands, I was led, by Divine Providence, to contract my expenditure, to dismiss one out of two servants, and to make certain other retrenchments. You well know, my children, how the world, and even my most intimate friends and acquaintance, opposed and ridiculed this measure, using arguments which certainly would have prevailed with me, had not my conduct, through the divine assistance, been regulated by those principles of justice and duty, the nature of which cannot, by any train of circumstances, be altered. I adopted the tenth commandment as my rule of conduct. This commandment saith, 'Thou shalt not covet;' and I felt, that, while living amidst circumstances in which more money than I actually possessed was necessary to supply my wants, it was utterly impossible for me even to attempt to observe this divine injunction. What then remained to be done, but to put myself, as much as possible, out of the reach of temptation? and I had no other prospect of doing this than by arranging my plans of living so much

within the compass of my means, as that I might be entirely set at liberty from cares of this depressing nature.

"How to accomplish this I knew not, and I was, therefore, for some time in strange perplexity; but, after a while, the way was gradually unfolded to my view, and I was enabled to see some inches forward: one thing after another gently revealed itself, and presently I beheld the whole way in which I ought to walk. To be sure, the path was narrow, and, at any rate, not paved with glory, to use a favourite expression of the French historians. It appeared, however, to me to be so incomparably preferable to the labyrinth of thorns and briars in which I had lately been involved, that I hesitated not a moment in resolving to advance in it; and was not a little strengthened in my purpose by your excellent wife here, my good Mr. Etherington, who entered on the scheme so cheerfully, that I once or twice looked to see if her eyes were wide open, or if she really were thoroughly apprized of what she was undertaking. So Henrietta and I went foremost, and her dear mother came trembling afterwards with Emmeline, who had a tear in one eye, and her finger in the other; while the enemy clapped his hands, and filled the air with shouts and clamours; and, what was worse than all, with such peals of contemptuous laughter as made the very echoes ring again. We, however, went on, and to speak after the manner of that good man, John Bunyan, 'After a while the shouts of the multitude did cease, and anon we heard nothing but the rushing of the waters of mercy, and the murmuring of the doves in the cliffs of the rocks. So we came on, and though we experienced one or two brushes from the enemy without, and the enemy within; yet after a while we came to the end of the strait, and are now arrived, as you see, at a wonderful fair and pleasant height, where we may look back on the troubles which we have passed, and look forward to the glories which are to come.' And if we are not filled with love and gratitude, I maintain that there is not one among us who deserves the name of a Christian."

No one made any reply to this speech of Mr. Vaughen's, for no one could: even uncle John was in tears. At this tender moment, however, a loud halloo indicated the approach of more company. Every one tried to look

unconcerned, and in came the good Squire, roaring out a scrap of the old song, “Come, see rural felicity,” and telling his brother that he should have been present two hours before, had he not fallen in with a badger-hunt at the ford of a river near which his way lay, which he found it impossible to leave till he had seen the issue.

“And so, brother Henry,” added he, after having paid his compliments to the bride, “so you are in your parlour again: I can’t say but I am sorry for it, for I have spent so many happy hours and half-hours in that kitchen, that I don’t know whether I ever liked any room so well in all my life.”

Immediately after breakfast, Emmeline and her husband took their leave; but the rest of the party remained to dinner.

And now, my gentle reader, having brought my history, by slow degrees, to this point, I must conclude it more succinctly.

The advice and example of Mr. Vaughen were long remembered by his children: and Henrietta in her farm, and Emmeline, first in her simple lodging at her husband’s curacy in Kent, and afterwards, when residing in the neat parsonage belonging to a small living into the possession of which her husband came soon after their marriage, are still giving to the religious world the most beautiful specimens of elegant manners, united with simple Christian habits: and we hope that their examples, and that of their parents, will not be lost to the professing world, but that the time may speedily come, when such instances of self-denial will abound through all the kingdoms of the earth.

The lady of the manor having here closed her manuscript, looked at her watch, and finding how far the evening was advanced, she requested her young people to join her in prayer.

A Prayer for simple Habits and moderate Desires.

“O THOU MOST MIGHTY LORD, and only wise God, whose understanding is infinite, and from whom no thought is concealed; deliver our hearts, we beseech thee, by the influence of thy Holy Spirit, from all cove-

tous, ambitious, and worldly principles. And grant that an abiding sense of thy continual presence, and not the dread of the world, may influence our actions, and regulate our habits.

“ Give us, in the first instance, such a view of thy will and purposes respecting the management of our affairs, as may be necessary for the direction of the conduct of our worldly plans. Give us grace to commit our concerns unreservedly and entirely into thy hands, and grant that we may never attempt to counteract thy purposes either by thought, word, or deed. Ever preserve us from endeavouring to raise ourselves in life by any dishonourable, mean, or crooked dealings, by any improper interference with our neighbour’s concerns, or by any departure, however minute, from truth. Impress us with this important fact, that thy paternal care is extended to all men; that thou desirest the good of all thy creatures, and that the well-being of our worst enemies need not by any means interfere with our own real benefit. Convince us of the grievous sinfulness of ambition and covetousness, whereby this earth has been filled with violence from the beginning of time to the present day.

“ And, instead of leaving us to the workings of these dreadful passions, do thou inspire us with that spirit of contentment by which we may be led to make the best of those possessions and enjoyments, those gifts and talents, which thou hast placed in our hands, not only for the promotion of our own well-being, which ought to be but a secondary and a far inferior consideration, but for the glory of Thee our God, and our promotion of the interests of thy kingdom on earth. Teach us to say, ‘ Thy kingdom come,’ and, ‘ Thy will be done,’ and deliver us from all undue desires of temporal and worldly aggrandizement. Assist us in the cultivation of humble views and simple habits. Let us not earnestly wish for any of those ornaments that are not within the reach of all the humble members of the family of God: such as gentle and courteous manners, graceful, neat, and orderly habits, a correct, refined, and elevated taste, and may we habitually cherish such sentiments and employ such language, as shall at once delight the ear, improve the apprehension, and correct the principles of our auditors. Teach us how to distinguish between true refinement and

the mere caprices of fashion; and give us that humility and charity which may enable us to conclude, that if in these less important matters and forms of life, other men may judge differently from ourselves, yet they may possibly judge as well.

"In one word, O blessed Lord God, set us free from the dominion of self, and grant that our minds may be habitually influenced by this solemn truth, that man lives not by bread alone.

"And now, all glory be to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, now and for evermore. Amen."

CHAPTER XXIII.

Q. *What dost thou chiefly learn by these Commandments?*

A. *I learn two Things: my Duty towards God, and my Duty towards my Neighbour.*

Q. *What is thy Duty towards God?*

A. *My Duty towards God is to believe in him, to fear him, and to love him with all my Heart, with all my Mind, with all my Soul, and with all my Strength; to worship him, to give him Thanks, to put my whole Trust in him, to call upon him, to honour his holy Name and his Word, and to serve him truly all the Days of my Life.*

THE parties at the manor-house were now become so highly interesting to the young people, that they began to look forwards with apprehension to that period at which there would be an end to these their regular opportunities of instruction. The lady of the manor had reason, however, to hope that she had been made the instrument of real and lasting good to some of her youthful auditors, and she trusted that all of them were more or less benefited by her admonitions. Apart from all religious considerations, she had lately observed in the young people a certain elevation of sentiment and a superiority of manner which they had not before manifested. They were now better able to appreciate that which is truly excellent; they were more freed from a fondness of those very ordinary topics of conversation which, under various modifications, engage the minds of the greater part of the female sex in those societies in which the love of literature has but little influence, and where scriptural knowledge is confined merely to controversial points.

The lady of the manor was fully aware that there are

few societies, or places of education, in England, perhaps in the world, in which the Bible is used as a source of instruction in all those branches of knowledge in which it may be legitimately employed: for the Bible is an exhaustless treasury of the best materials for general intellectual improvement; it is full of poetical beauties, correct and perfect outlines of history, views of future glory, curious notices of ancient manners, and pure and wise maxims; moreover, it possesses a language of types and shadows which cannot be understood without a correct knowledge of many of the finest works of nature and of art. The books of history and prophecy contained in the Holy Scriptures, if properly unfolded to the reader, are calculated (as the lady of the manor was fully aware) to present such views of past, present, and future periods, such an horizon, so perfect, and so correct, in the still lengthening distance, of all that has passed from the beginning of time, and such prospects of future glory stretching in misty splendour beyond the limits of temporal duration into the boundless expanse of eternity, as all the accumulated mass of human learning might pretend to in vain. Such a whole, in short, does the Bible present, as must necessarily expand the mind in its attempts to comprehend it, and though it may be but imperfectly conceived, still it must have a powerful tendency to preserve the mental faculties from resting too minutely on present things, and being unduly occupied by the various nothings which continually press upon the senses.

It had therefore been the object of the lady of the manor, in all her instructions, to present extended and useful views of every kind to her young people, to teach them to look beyond the immediate scenes which surrounded them, and to raise them above that kind of impertinent curiosity, which prompts so many uncultivated persons to occupy themselves with the concerns of their neighbours: and if she had failed, in some degree, in accomplishing all of her views, she had at least succeeded in this,—that she had been enabled to convince many of her young people of the degradation of character which is the invariable consequence of a gossiping spirit.

The young ladies had gone through the review of the commandments in general with the lady of the manor:

and as it was now necessary to proceed to other parts of the Church Catechism, the next time that the little party met at the manor-house, the lady requested one of her young friends to repeat that fine summary of our duty towards God which immediately follows the commandments; she herself having first proposed the question,— “What is thy duty towards God?”

“ My duty towards God,” replied one of the young ladies, “ is to believe in him, to fear him, and to love him with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength; to worship him, to give him thanks, to put my whole trust in him, to call upon him, to honour his holy name and his word, and to serve him truly all the days of my life.”

“ In your review of the Commandments, Miss Emmeline,” enquired the lady of the manor, “ what judgment have you passed on yourselves? You are acquainted with the sentiments of your companions! do you stand condemned by the law? or do you plead ‘ Not guilty?’ ”

“ We all confess ourselves guilty, and that we are condemned by the law,” replied Miss Emmeline, “ one and all of us. This is our general and unreserved opinion. By the Commandments we are all worthy of death; but you, Madam, have led us also to understand, that, although by the law we must perish, if confiding in ourselves, yet that, in our state as members of Christ, (supposing us to be such,) we are justified by the same law, inasmuch as we have obeyed it in the person of our spiritual Head, and, therefore, that same attribute of divine justice, by which we were originally condemned, becomes, at the moment that we are made one in Christ, and are thus constituted the partakers of his righteousness, a security for our justification.”

“ You have stated the doctrine correctly,” replied the lady of the manor, “ for if divine justice has accepted the righteousness of Christ, as an atonement for the sins of the believer, that justice is bound by its own perfections to deliver this believer from the eternal punishment of his sins. We have, therefore, now nothing more to do with the law that was delivered on Mount Sinai, than to regard it as a rule of life, and as an indication of the divine will in certain points; for if this law continued in its original force, and if all who do not keep it

are condemned, I ask you, ‘Wherefore do we not at least attempt to observe the Sabbath?’”

“But do we not attempt to keep the Sabbath, Ma’am?” asked one of the young ladies.

“Certainly not,” returned the lady of the manor; “the Sabbath is not the day that is now appointed by our Church to be regarded as sacred: the Sabbath is the seventh day of the week, and not the first. The day which is now observed by us is the Lord’s-day; and though we honour it nearly as the Sabbath was regarded under the old covenant, yet it is not the original Sabbath; and, therefore, if we do not believe that the law delivered from Mount Sinai is done away with, I repeat, ‘Why don’t you keep the Sabbath?’”

“But if we inculcate this opinion, that is, of the abrogation of the moral law that was delivered from Mount Sinai, Madam,” said Miss Emmeline, modestly, “might it not lead to licentiousness?”

“No, my dear young lady,” replied her amiable instructress, “and that for two reasons: the first, which is a very plain one, being, that the same person who fulfilled the law delivered on Mount Sinai, and who annulled its penalties, renewed every moral obligation enforced therein, though he did not renew the positive institution of the original Sabbath: for what, I ask you, were his words on these subjects?—*Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.* (Matt. v. 17, 18.) And again: *He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: And he that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father’s which sent me.* (John xiv. 21, 24.) And my second reason is this, that it is actually impossible for a member of Christ to live in habitual sin: either he is not a member of Christ, or he cannot love sin. A good branch inserted into a bad stock cannot produce the same fruit as the stock into which it has been grafted. A gardener would smile at such a supposition. The lower branches of the old stock may indeed rise up from beneath the graft, but the nature of the good branch must still continue unaltered,

and *peculiarly its own*; and it is the business of the careful gardener to cut off these inferior sprouts and cast them in the dust."

The young lady looked meditatively, and then said, "One thing I hope, and that is, that what I have learned in this house may abide by me, and continue to supply me with matter of reflection through my life; at present, however, I fear that what I have heard has not taken such hold of my mind as it ought to do. If indeed the good branch has been grafted in my heart, which I much fear is not the case, the lower branches in the old stock have not yet been pruned; or if pruned, they are now, alas! putting forth again, and expanding themselves in leaves and blossoms."

The young ladies, together with the lady of the manor, now proceeded to the more especial concerns of the evening; and the latter expressed herself to the following purpose:—

"As the nature and attributes of God have constituted the subject of a previous discourse, I shall not now enter upon these points in as particular a manner as I formerly did, but shall content myself with reading to you, my dear young people, a short history, bearing a close connexion with that part of the Catechism which is to form the subject of our meditation this day.

"In this story, the horrible effects of infidel principles, and a departure from God, are pointed out in a manner particularly striking; the narrative being composed of facts, and describing scenes which are replete with inconceivable horror, but many of which must be acknowledged to be too descriptive of real life by those who have lately visited the countries in which these events are said to have taken place."

The lady of the manor then opened her manuscript, and proceeded to read.

La Morgue.

Victor Louis, Comte de V——, was the representative of an ancient family, whose estates lay in the south of France. This young man spent his youth in the court of Louis the Sixteenth, and having married early, at the time of the breaking out of the French revolution, he

found himself a widower, with one son of about four years of age.

When the troubles first began to agitate the capital, he withdrew from Paris to his own estates, situated, as we have just observed, in the south of France; and there he resided till the state of public affairs became such, that, in order to preserve his life, and that of his son and orphan niece, of whom he had the care, he was compelled to fly into Germany, where he continued till the reign of terror was past, and till he was enabled, with tolerable security, to return to his country.

We have spoken of a niece of the Comte de V——. This young lady, whose name was Virginie, was the daughter of a younger brother of the Comte, and she had been left, together with her brother, under the guardianship of her uncle, in consequence of the deaths of her parents. By this arrangement, she had been the companion of her uncle's flight, had continued with him during his absence from his native country, and had also returned with him when he came back to France.

The brother of Virginie, though he was placed, equally with herself, under his uncle's guardianship, was, however, owing to certain circumstances, separated from the rest of the family at the moment of their flight, and he, in consequence, remained a stranger to them for many years.

At the period when the Comte found it necessary to make his escape, Clermont (his nephew) was on a visit to a great aunt, whose estate lay in a northern province of France. She was an old and infirm person; but as her family was noble, she was suspected of encouraging aristocratic principles; and her safety, therefore, being threatened, she contrived to escape in disguise to the Low Country, and from thence into Holland, where she procured a passage to England, and arrived in that happy country with her nephew, being possessed only of a little money and some old family jewels.

Madame de Rosemont, the aunt of Clermont, had long been afflicted with rheumatic disorders. On her reaching England, she was, therefore, recommended to proceed to Bath, whither she went, and, on her arrival, hired a single apartment in a lodging-house, and endeavoured to accommodate her habits as much as possible to her circumstances.

In this situation, Clermont, then between five and six years of age, was her only companion, and she was much indebted to his attentions for the few remaining consolations which she enjoyed. He was an interesting boy in person, gentle and courteous in his deportment, and still appearing with the air of a gentleman's child, although his clothes were threadbare, and he wore no stockings.

It pleased Him in whom the fatherless find mercy, that there should at that time be an old gentleman of independent fortune residing in the same house with Madame de Rosemont at Bath. The kind and dutiful attentions of the little stranger to his infirm relative at first excited the pity of this gentleman, whose name was Charlton; and as his love and pity were continually augmented by all that he observed of this little foreigner, he at length resolved, for the sake of this child, to cultivate an acquaintance with Madame de Rosemont, and to offer her any assistance which her situation might require.

Madame de Rosemont, was very grateful for the kind attentions of Mr. Charlton; but, with a nobleness of spirit which we have not unfrequently had proof of in persons of her nation; she seemed more anxious to interest the kind stranger in the behalf of her little nephew, than to obtain from him any relief for her own necessities.

We might here say much upon the gradual growth of mutual affection which took place between Mr. Charlton and little Clermont; but perhaps the nature of feelings of this kind is better elucidated by the mention of their effects, than by any description which might otherwise be given of them. Suffice it to say, that such was the regard with which the poor orphan had been enabled to inspire Mr. Charlton, that the old gentleman hesitated not, when Madame de Rosemont died, (an event which took place about six months after her arrival in England,) to take this friendless boy under his protection, and, when he left Bath, he carried him with him to his own house, which was situated in a very beautiful district of the county of Berks.

Mr. Charlton was a bachelor; he had made his own fortune, and he had no very near relation. There was, therefore, no person who had a right to call him to account for this whim of adopting the little foreigner, for such many pronounced this measure to be: notwithstanding-

ing which, when Mr. Charlton's neighbours beheld the consistent and kind attentions of the good old gentleman to the child, and the pains which he took to educate him in such a manner as might render him a valuable member of society, they became so entirely reconciled to what he had done, that they greatly rejoiced to see the promise of much that was amiable in the little stranger, by which they trusted that the old gentleman would be rewarded for his charitable adoption of him.

Clermont was remarkably quick in the acquirement of knowledge; insomuch that Mr. Charlton, who lived in retirement, found great pleasure in giving him instruction: and to this end he kept the boy constantly with him, he made him the companion of his walks in the fields, his visits to the house of prayer and the habitations of the poor, and his assistant when working in his garden, which was one of his chief amusements.

When the aged are pious, and willing to please and be pleased, they are particularly agreeable to children, and I have often seen a friendship as perfect, and more sweet, existing between a pious old person and a child, than between any other two individuals of whatever circumstances. For between youth and age there is not often much rivalry, and the confidence of the child is sweetly repaid by the protecting tenderness of the old man.

I could also say much of the various methods which Mr. Charlton adopted to improve Clermont, and to render him such a character as he earnestly wished to make him. Mr. Charlton was a decided Christian: it cannot therefore be questioned that he made religion the Alpha and the Omega of his instructions; and, as all the habits of the child were founded upon sound and simple Christian principles, it is fair to infer, that, with the divine blessing, the little stranger was at once humble, courteous, and contented.

Thus Clermont de V—— attained the age of seventeen, under the charge of Mr. Charlton; at which time the worthy old gentleman, who intended to bring him up to one of the liberal professions, (as the young man expressed his desire to make England his place of abode through life,) resolved upon sending him to the University; and, in consequence, he placed him at Oxford, where he remained the usual time: when, having taken

his degree, he returned to his guardian's house, intending to study for orders amidst that sweet retirement where the best and the happiest portion of his life had been spent.

In the mean time, Clermont had heard but little of his relations in France: he had, indeed, been told that his uncle had returned to his country, and that he had been restored to his estates and honours; that his sister was still living under his charge; and that his cousin was grown up, and had distinguished himself on several occasions in the army under the emperor. About the period, however, of which we were speaking, while Clermont was studying at home, after having quitted the University, a captain of an American vessel, who was a particular friend of his uncle, arriving in England, brought a very pressing invitation to the young man from his friends, and engaged that if he would confide himself to his care, he would land him safe in France, and put him in a way to reach his relatives without danger: for, as Clermont was entirely of French extraction, and could speak the language well, and as his friends were at that period in high favour with government, no doubt was entertained of his personal safety both in going and returning.

It was with considerable perturbation that Mr. Charlton heard of this proposal. On many accounts he trembled for the consequences of this journey. As there were, however, certain circumstances (which it would take too much time to enumerate at large) which concurred to render this visit desirable, the good old gentleman yielded to the surrender of his adopted son for a while, though not, as I before said, without considerable uneasiness: not that he was much disturbed respecting the danger which Clermont might personally incur from this journey; but he well knew the infidel character of the persons with whom his ward was about to associate, and he trembled lest the pure principles of his pupil should be corrupted by the evil communications to which he must be exposed.

Many were the earnest and serious conversations which took place between Mr. Charlton and Clermont previous to this journey, one of which I shall endeavour to lay, with some precision, before my reader.

And, first, the venerable instructor discoursed with his pupil on the nature of God, that infinite and incomprehensible Being, the Creator of all things, who preserves and governs every thing by his almighty power and wisdom, and who is the only proper object of our worship; —He who exists of himself, and gives and maintains existence in all others; —He on whom all depend, who is the fountain of happiness, and in separation from whom consists the horrors of eternal death. He next proceeded to expatiate on the nature of faith, which, taken in its most simple form, may be considered as merely a dependence on the veracity of another; and he shewed that this faith, even in this its most simple modification, was exceedingly rare as exercised by man with respect to God, and that the Creator himself was habitually denied that degree of confidence which not unfrequently subsists between man and man.

“ *He that cometh to God,*” said Mr. Charlton, “ *must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.* (Heb. xi. 6.) A man who has this assurance,” continued the old gentleman, “ must necessarily, though he may be no further enlightened, possess the fear of God: for, as man loves rewards, and dreads punishment, he would naturally fear him who, he is habitually persuaded, is both able and willing to punish the guilty; and thus the fear of God will become the beginning of wisdom—examples of which have been observed in persons living in heathen nations; and though these examples are rare and imperfect, yet are they sufficient to prove the truth of St. Paul’s words—*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.* (Rom. i. 18—20.)

“ Thus you see,” continued Mr. Charlton, “ that man, without any further light than that of nature, ought to entertain such fear of God, as would restrain him from that ungodliness and unrighteousness against which the wrath of the Creator is revealed.

"But in the country to which you are about to go, my son," continued the good old gentleman, "you will not only meet with those who speak of the Christian system as a late invention, the fabrication of priestcraft, but you will come into contact with persons who are atheists both in deed and in word—persons who defy the authority of God, despise his laws, and even question his existence; and thus deprive themselves of all that comfort and support without which the creature either must cease to exist, or if, from the immortality of his nature, he continues to exist, his being is prolonged like that of the fallen angels, in blackness, darkness, and despair."

"You remember the period, my son," continued Mr. Charlton, "before you left me to mix with the world in the place where you have spent the last few years of your life; and you may recollect, yes, and you surely will ever recollect with pleasure, the calm and delicious manner in which our lives at that time passed away. How you then rejoiced in my society! how you regretted the least separation from me! and how often you expressed yourself as unable even to enjoy your amusements in my absence! You did not then deceive me, Clermont! you surely felt all that you then expressed! I never questioned your sincerity!"

"No, no, my father," said the young man, his dark eyes suddenly becoming suffused with tears, and his cheeks flushing at the question, "I did not deceive you. The happiest days that I ever spent, or ever shall spend on earth, were when I lived with you, and with you only; when I knew nothing of the world, and you were my only friend."

"Enough, my son," said Mr. Charlton. "It was not because I doubted your sincerity that I put the question, but in order to elucidate my argument. A father stands with respect to a child, and during the years of childhood, in the place of God.—Man, at best, must be a poor, a very poor representative of the heavenly Parent; nevertheless, the authority and influence of the person who has the exclusive control of a child are such, that they afford the only image which can be found on earth of the paternal care of God towards his creatures: and that sense of bereavement and helplessness which a child feels in the absence of a tender, wise, and watchful pa-

rent, may perhaps furnish the most striking emblem of the state of a rational creature spiritually absent from the Creator. A child, whether ill or well disposed, must experience a sense of bereavement in the loss of a good parent; and I have often remarked the pathetic manner in which an orphan child seems to seek, among strangers, from some elder person, those tender sympathies of which he was deprived by the loss of his parents. How, though untaught, does such a one apply the tender name of parent to the first person who shews him particular kindness! and how do paternal and filial affections grow in the hearts of persons who by birth are strangers to the realities of these endearing characters!

"A well-disposed and affectionate child," continued Mr. Charlton, "deplores his father's absence, weeps and laments the loss, and, if he falls into error for want of his usual support, is restless, uneasy, and dissatisfied under the fall. But the insubordinate son at first rejoices in the removal of the restraint, and instantly sets about to plan his own happiness, and to execute the desires of his evil heart, for a while triumphing in his liberty; till at length his lusts become his master, his punishment overtakes him, and, in his agony, he is ready to curse the cause by which the salutary restraint was removed.

"Thus, in both cases, the happiness of the child, humanly speaking, depends on the parent; and, in like manner, the true advantage and happiness of man wholly depends on his Creator, and nothing more nor less than the absence of God is requisite to make a hell.

"While the sinner, however vile, is still under the dealings of the Almighty, severe as may be his trials, and repeated as may be his chastisements, there is hope for him, and he cannot yet be said to be truly miserable. But when the Lord ceases to deal with man any longer, when he leaves him to himself, then his hell begins; and if we had any faculty by which we could distinguish those who are forsaken of the Lord, though still living on earth, from those persons with whom the Lord is dealing in mercy, we should discover that the torments of hell had already begun in the breasts of the former, and that the misery of the damned was commencing within them, though outwardly perhaps they might ap-

pear to be possessing every thing with which this world could supply them. These are the persons of whom the Psalmist thus speaks—*Deliver my soul from the wicked, which is thy sword: from men which are thy hand, O Lord, from men of the world, which have their portion in this life, and whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasure: they are full of children, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes.* (Psalm xvii. 13, 14.)

“ There is a simple but a comprehensive and important summary of man’s duty to God in the Catechism of the Church of which you are about to become a minister,” proceeded Mr. Charlton, “ of which you, my dear Clermont, will not think the less from your having been taught to repeat it from an infant. The words, you will remember, are to this effect:—‘ My duty towards God is to believe in him, to fear him, and to love him with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength; to worship him, to give him thanks, to put my whole trust in him, to call upon him, to honour his holy name and his word, and to serve him truly all the days of my life.’ ”

“ The mind of man before the Fall, while he was yet unalienated from his Maker by sin, spontaneously produced every feeling described in this summary, just as the flowers of Eden then sprang without culture from the beautiful and uncursed earth: and when fallen man is again brought near to God through Christ, and has his nature renewed by the influences of the Divine Spirit, he a second time becomes in some degree capable of cherishing all those blessed feelings towards his Maker which Adam felt in his original state; and when he shall finally be rendered victorious in death, the love and service of God will constitute his occupation and happiness through the endless circle of eternity.

“ When you, my son, are absent from me,” continued Mr. Charlton, “ you will remember this conversation, and I trust that it may be a means of guarding you against the delusions of the world. The Continent of Europe, and particularly your own native country, has lately abounded with characters of the most awful impiety, persons who, being full of self-importance, and possessing a high idea of their own intellectual powers, despise the God who made them, and utterly reject the

whole scheme of salvation by Christ. Hence have arisen all the wars, all those scenes of private and public crime, which for some years have agitated your nation; and I fear that you will see, when in France, such effects of this infidelity as at this time you are hardly able to conceive. O my son, entreat that you may be supported in this coming hour of trial. Rely on your God, rest on his strength, pray to be kept close to Him. To Him I devote you: may He be your Father! confide in Him as once you did in me; and let the words of the holy Psalmist form the continued subject of your prayer—*Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens. Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until that he have mercy upon us. Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us: for we are exceedingly filled with contempt. Our soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of those that are at ease, and with the contempt of the proud.*" (Psalm cxxiii.)

We do not mean to enter minutely into an account of Clermont's separation from Mr. Charlton, or of his short voyage to France. Suffice it to say, that he arrived safely in Paris, from whence, having heard that his uncle and sister were residing at an estate possessed by the former about twenty leagues from the capital, he proceeded to this place without loss of time, and arrived, about noon, at the gates of the château, which was situated at the end of a long avenue of elms and tillenel.

It was summer time. The scene which surrounded him was fine, and not the less imposing from its being totally different from every thing that he had been accustomed to see in England, where every object, however beautifully arranged, however rich and smiling, is on a scale so small, that it seems to convey to the foreign eye the idea of Lilliput or Fairy-Land. On the contrary, the valleys of France are wide, and the elevations, though considerable, are so removed from the eye, that they seem less than they really are. Whole tracts of country appear in almost every prospect covered with forest; from which not unfrequently the white tower of a church alone conspicuously rises, the little villages by which they are commonly encircled being wholly con-

cealed by the surrounding trees, unless, here and there, a pigeon-house and a Gothic turret of more than ordinary elevation, peeping from above the shade, convey the idea of ancient dignity, and suggest imaginations of feudal modes of living which are now no more.

The gates of the château were presently opened to Clermont, whose arrival was about this time expected; and the coachman, smacking his whip with a flourish, (of which persons of this denomination in France only understand the method,) drove up immediately to the great door of the château, the entrance to which was by a high yet ruinous flight of steps. Had not Clermont been already some days in France, he would have augured somewhat unfavourably concerning the finances of the family from the dilapidated and slovenly appearance of every thing visible about the château. But his eye had been by this time so well accustomed to inconsistencies of this kind, that he drew no inauspicious conclusion from certain deficiencies which he observed in the stone parapet on the roof of the house, from the grass and weeds which grew carelessly in the gravel walks, from the want of paint on the numerous window-shutters, and from the total absence of glass in the upper windows of the roof.

As soon as the horses stopped, the young man alighted from his carriage, and having committed his luggage to the charge of a lacquey, whom he had hired at Paris, he was instantly conducted through a large vestibule into an equally spacious saloon, where he found the family party assembled, and presenting a variety of singular groups.

The lady of the château, to wit, the second wife of the Comte de V——, was engaged in playing at chess, before a large open window, with a young officer of the legion d'honneur, the fierceness of whose aspect, strengthened by a pair of large mustachoes, formed a striking contrast with the languishing air of his partner. The Comtesse de V—— was a woman of a certain age, and she therefore owed to her perruquier, her perfumer, (who supplied the various washes for her complexion,) her milliner, and her femme de chambre, that juvenile appearance which she still had in the eyes of those who beheld her only for the first time, and which, added to

a girlish manner, rendered her precisely the figure which every one has depicted to himself of a vain woman who cannot condescend to grow old. A loud and affected laugh from this lady, intermingled with the fashionable oaths of her young adversary, were the first sounds which reached the ears of Clermont, as he entered the door. In another part of this spacious saloon, a cluster of young persons of both sexes were gathered round a harp. And on a sofa, in another window, sat Virginie, the sister of Clermont, a table which stood before her being littered with materials for drawing, with which she seemed to be idly occupied; while, by her side, on the same sofa, lounged her cousin Victor. In a recess, at the further end of the room, was a billiard-table, at which was the comte himself, together with several gentlemen, deeply engaged in the game. In another part of the hall sat a young lady at an easel, employed in drawing the portrait of a stout elderly gentleman, to whom she at the same time paid her court by many artificial smiles and pretty speeches; and round her stood a group of loungers, and probably of flatterers of the elderly gentleman, who proved to be the person of the highest rank and consequence of the party, and one who, having lately become a widower, might be supposed to entertain the view of making a future choice.

The entrance of Clermont, as might be expected, had the effect of breaking up all these separate parties. The strangers rose to look at him, and pay their compliments; and his relations gathered round him, and embraced him with apparent warmth, welcomed him to France, regretted his long absence, and Virginie expressed their hopes that he was now come to finish his days with them.

It was some time, however, before Clermont could be made to understand the variety of new relations which claimed his attention. He had indeed heard that his uncle was married again; but he was astonished and displeased at the gay and juvenile air of his lady. Neither was his sister's appearance, nor that of his cousin Victor, more congenial with his feelings. Virginie, though three years younger than her brother, already had the manner of a female who was well practised in the world, and thoroughly versed in all the arts

by which some women endeavour to attract and secure the attentions of the other sex. Young as she was, she seemed to be indebted to rouge and other fashionable ornaments for the showy appearance which she made; an appearance which to some persons might perhaps be attractive, (for she was naturally beautiful,) but which, to the pure and refined taste of Clermont, was at once revolting and pitiable.

Victor was a handsome young man, having fine dark eyes, and hair which, without giving his valet any trouble, assumed, at pleasure, the most picturesque or modish appearance. His carriage was animated and graceful; and he possessed, together with all the fashionable accomplishments of the day, (such as dancing, fencing, and playing with skill at every game of chance,) a sufficient extent of learning to enable him to appear with credit in any literary company into which he might chance to fall. The first appearance of this young man was not altogether displeasing to Clermont. He hoped that he saw something amiable in him. He was attracted by his easy carriage and his engaging manners. But every moment's increasing acquaintance deducted a little from this good opinion, and he had reason, in a very short time, to look upon him, if not with dread, at least with a degree of apprehension which soon became matured into a fearful certainty.

We have not yet particularly described the Comte de V—— himself, neither was his character so easily discovered as that of his son; for he was reserved, cold, and guarded. Clermont was, however, received by him with sufficient politeness; and the young man felt that his uncle's age, his rank, his situation in life, and his near relationship to his departed father, gave him a title to his respect. He wished also to be able to add esteem to respect; but when any comparison presented itself between this man and Mr. Charlton, it was always so much to the disadvantage of the former, that Clermont could not help continually lifting up his heart in thanksgiving to God for the blessing which had been vouchsafed him in his being placed during the tender years of childhood under the superintendence of Christians. The Comte de V—— was, in fact, an infidel, and a fierce politician, though he had frequently contrived to conceal his prin-

ples, and to adapt his conversation so exactly to the state of the times, that he was now high in favour with government, and had been so through the several late changes and revolutions of the state.

Thus have we described the principal characters that were then met in the château. Besides these were many others, who had come by the invitation of the comte to enjoy the charms of a country situation in the Château de V——; a sort of rural life, of which it is the fashion to speak with enthusiasm in Paris, but which very few Parisians know how to enjoy. As the party were, however, to continue for some weeks in the château, it was necessary that all should seem pleased while they were together. An air of enjoyment was, therefore, assumed by every individual, and the principal hours of each day were filled up by such amusements as the country would afford, or as could by any means be transported from the town. Among the former were riding, archery, promenades (as these persons would term them) upon the water, in carriages and on foot; and, among the latter, were balls, dilettante plays, concerts, and games of chance of every denomination, multiplied and varied with a degree of ingenuity and invention worthy of a better purpose.

But to return to Clermont.—This young man had not been many hours an inmate of the château, before he discovered that his opinions on religious subjects were more directly opposed to those of his relations than he had hoped that, on acquaintance, they would prove. He had, indeed, expected to find his sister a Papist, and his cousin careless alike about all religions; but he had not prepared himself to expect from the mouths of these young persons infidel, if not blasphemous, expressions: and to hear such language uttered with the utmost levity, and in the course of their most ordinary conversation, filled him with a degree of horror which he had no power to conceal, though he desired, in general, to restrain his feelings in such a way as might render his interference the more acceptable and salutary, whenever it might appear most seasonable for him to make known either to his sister or cousin the horror with which these dreadful sentiments inspired him. Other discoveries he presently made, which increased his alarm for his sister. He had been but a very short time in the family before he per-

ceived that Victor and Virginie were distinguished by each other with an especial mutual regard, which, on the part of Virginie, appeared to be very strong, and which, on that of Victor, perhaps was not less sincere, though the extraordinary carelessness and independence of the young man's manner might sometimes have tended to mislead a careless observer. Clermont was not, however, an unconcerned looker-on, but was deeply interested in every thing which related to these his nearest natural connexions.

It was when seated at dinner on the first day of his arrival at the château, in the midst of a gay and brilliant assembly, that Clermont first became acquainted with the sentiments that I have already mentioned. Virginie was seated between himself and Victor, and he, therefore, overheard several little words which were whispered between them, and which induced him to form this opinion. But this discovery, which otherwise might not have displeased him, was, as I before remarked, rendered particularly painful in his estimation by the observations that he was at the same time enabled to make upon the dangerous principles of the young people.

Several weeks had elapsed in the way that I have been describing, during which Clermont vainly attempted to engage the confidence of his sister: though she always appeared to be easy and unreserved with him, yet her manner was at one time the ease of a fashionable woman in the company of strangers, and at another the unre-servedness of a playful child. It seemed impossible to prevail on her to enter upon a single serious reflection; and if her brother attempted to reason with her about the impiety of her principles and of her language, she would instantly reply, “But are you not a heretic, brother? and I a Catholic? How then can we expect to agree on these matters?”

It was in vain for him to attempt to explain to her that there were certain points in which a Protestant and Papist might cordially meet, and that open profaneness must be equally unacceptable to the sincere[”] of either party: in consequence of which, if she were actually what she professed to be, she could not allow herself in such impious expressions as she daily indulged.

When thus pressed, she invariably evaded making a

reply by having recourse to some childish or playful subterfuge. On one of these occasions she pretended to have pierced her finger with the thorn of a rose with which she had been playing, and she uttered, in consequence, a thousand pitiful cries, wringing her hands, and pressing her wounded finger, or rather the finger supposed to be wounded, against her lips, in order, as it were, to deaden the pain. On another occasion, she contrived to drop her cashmere as they were walking in the avenue, and managed to entangle her foot so conveniently in it, that the thread of the discourse was entirely lost before every thing was again arranged in its due order.

For a while Clermont was the complete dupe of these tricks, and though he was vexed by these interruptions, which continually occurred in the midst of their most serious conversations, still he was far from attributing them to their real cause. He believed, indeed, that his sister was light and vain, but he did not suppose her designing; and at all events he was too deeply interested in her spiritual welfare, to allow himself to be disheartened by the trifling, though perpetually recurring, difficulties which he had hitherto encountered. He at length, however, formed the resolution to be more close and pressing in his discourse with her than he had ever before been. But now a new obstacle occurred: he found it every day more and more impossible to be alone with her; she continually devised some pretext for avoiding him; and thus it became necessary that he should either speak to her in public or not at all. As her manner was, however, always apparently open and affectionate, he still did not imagine that it was intentionally that she shunned him.

In the mean time, Clermont continually witnessed a mode of life of which he had not previously formed an idea, as he never had read romances, and as nothing of real life in the country where he had been educated approached in the least degree towards what he then habitually saw.

The persons who were at that time assembled in the Château de V—— were such as divided their lives between pleasure and politics: females who made the arts of coquetry their ostensible business, while political

intrigue was the real object of their lives; and men, who, though they pretended to be utterly devoted to gallantry, were secretly absorbed by ambition, and by that alone.

In consequence of these hidden motives of action, there was an apparent inconsistency in the conduct of those by whom he was surrounded which puzzled and astonished Clermont beyond measure. He soon perceived that the duties and obligations of the marriage state were but little regarded either by ladies or gentlemen in the society among which he then resided. But when he saw handsome and fashionable females sacrificing their virtue to old men, and, on the contrary, when he beheld young men who seemed to be devoted to elderly and disagreeable women, he could not help thinking that these persons were sinning without motive, and bartering their reputation and honour without even the shadow of an equivalent: for, as I before said, Clermont had no idea of the secret springs of these persons' conduct.

In the mean time, the love of amusement seemed to have turned every head. No one could rest quietly within the house. Schemes were ever in agitation by which the environs of the château were to be converted into a second Arcadia. Nothing was here spoken of but rural theatres, concerts by moonlight, dances under the shade of trees, and other caprices of the same nature, which might have passed off better, if the parties concerned had possessed but the semblance of that simplicity which they pretended so greatly to admire. But as it was, the highly artificial and corrupt manners, principles, and appearance, which these persons brought with them from Paris, evidently so ill assorted with the really fine natural beauties which they chose for the scenes of their follies, that Clermont was filled at once with disgust, astonishment, and pity, at this excess of human folly, of which he had never before formed any conception.

It was on an occasion of this kind, namely the fête of the Comtesse de V—— which was to be distinguished by a rustic ball beneath the trees, that Clermont had a conversation with his sister and Victor, which led to a fuller explanation of their sentiments on both sides than had hitherto taken place.

On the evening of the fête, the comtesse had ordered a beautiful grove, in the vicinity of the castle, to be set forth with couches, adorned with garlands, and tables furnished with fruits and flowers, with cream and sweet-meats. Here were assembled all the villagers and tenants of the comte, to dance cotillions, while the musicians, placed on a scaffold of considerable height in the centre of the festive groups, regulated the steps of each.

After an early dinner, the ladies and gentlemen of the château repaired to this scene of amusement; and those among them who were still young, or who wished to be thought so, mingled with the peasants, and became companions of the dance.

Clermont accompanied them to the grove, yet he declined dancing, though much solicited so to do; but taking his seat on one of the couches before mentioned, he continued for a length of time contemplating the scene before him. He was situated near the various sets of dancers, where the branches above his head afforded a thick and beautiful canopy, and where a short turf beneath his feet supplied as fair a carpet. To the right and left were groups of dancers, who moved in measure, as the music directed them; and who, though their parties were formed of heterogeneous orders, and persons of various degrees, exhibited, nevertheless, the same agility, dexterity, and we might almost say, the same grace. The peasants wore blue petticoats and white jackets, their hair being neatly drawn under their white caps, and their faces were flushed with health and exercise, and embrowned by constant exposure to the open air; while the ladies of the château, who were fancifully dressed in a kind of rustic habit, owed the bright red, which concealed the more faded colour of their cheeks, to the rouge which no French woman is ashamed of displaying.

Immediately in the front of Clermont's seat was a long vista formed of tillenels, and terminated by a grotto from which gushed a clear stream of water; within the shade of this grotto, and bending over a small dripping rock at its mouth, there was the statue of a naiad: the whole constituting, together with the groups of dancers, and tables enriched with fruits and flowers, such scenes as inexperienced and unrenewed minds no doubt often fancy

to themselves as abounding with every delight. But Clermont, though young, had, by the divine blessing on the excellent education which he had enjoyed, acquired a more correct and elevated mode of thinking and reasoning upon every subject than the untaught and unregenerate mass of his fellow-creatures; and this had happened according to the words of the apostle, who saith, *If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.* (2 Cor. v. 17.) Consequently, the reflections which occupied Clermont in reference to this scene, and also to that love of pleasure, which, in one form or other, is so remarkable in every order, degree, and description of persons in the French nation, were totally the reverse of those which would have been made by one who continued still ignorant of true religion, and of the nature of the human heart. Clermont was aware that real happiness consisted in an intimate union of heart with the eternal Creator and Father of all human beings; and he was persuaded that without that union every intelligent creature must be miserable, and that all attempts of men to derive happiness from any circumstances independent of God, must not only prove abortive, but must bring with them their own punishment, in the anger of the Almighty, and the consequent darkness of the soul, and confusion and horror of the spirits. He considered the state of man upon earth to be as it is represented in the Scripture of Truth: he regarded him as a fallen creature, as one who by his sins has crucified the Lord of glory; and he felt that, although the Lord Jehovah had encouraged him to look up again after his fall, and had opened unto him the way of salvation, yet that he permits him not to taste any true enjoyment independent of himself. And, indeed, it is in the very nature of things, that he should not, amidst any circumstances, be really happy without God.

The beautiful words of the hymn at this moment presented themselves to Clermont--

“ My God, my life, my love,
To thee, to thee I call;
I cannot live, if thou remove,
For thou art all in all.”

And while he yet repeated these words, Victor and Vir-

ginie, who had been together all the afternoon, quitted the dance, and took their seats on a sofa which was placed directly opposite to Clermont. They were both in high spirits, and expressed, by looks which Clermont pretty well understood, their contempt of the manner in which he had withdrawn himself from the lively amusements of the evening. "And so," said Virginie, as she seated herself, "you still continue to act the stoic philosopher, my good brother; but are you aware that we are now in the country, among rude and illiterate persons, who cannot comprehend the merits of this high flight of human wisdom, and who would respect you quite as much for joining in the dance, and appearing cheerful, as for sitting there and affecting superiority to the whole world?"

"At any rate, Mademoiselle," replied Clermont, with good-humour, "you are not inclined to augment my self-love. How often must I repeat in my defence, that I never practised dancing! that I do not understand your *chassés et moulinéts*, and that I should only expose myself to ridicule by attempting them!"

"You have lived in England, Clermont," said Victor, with an expression of contempt, which he scarcely endeavoured to conceal with a smile, "till you have acquired all the insipidity of the English character. You are as cold, my friend, as the November fogs, and as sedate as the old Saxon who brought you up." Then turning to Virginie, taking her hand, and looking at her with an expression of affection which formed a strong contrast with the cold contempt of his manner to her brother, he added, "Had Clermont been brought up with us, my lovely Virginie, in the old château of Bellevue, the glowing sun of Languedoc would perhaps have imparted more warmth to his heart than the cold fogs of the little island have succeeded in doing."

Clermont smiled, and thanked Victor with much good-humour for his kind wish.

Victor took no notice of this reply of Clermont. The mention of Languedoc, where the former had spent many years of the earlier part of his life, in company with Virginie, under the charge of a tutor and governess in an ancient family mansion of the comte, had revived many feelings and recollections of childhood, which for

a few minutes absorbed his whole mind. "Ah, Virginie!" continued the young man, as he leaned over her and held her hand, "Clermont, after all, is to be pitied, for having been separated from us. O, what happy days were those when we were in Languedoc! Do you remember the evenings of the vintage, when we danced under the great elm tree, and when the little good man, Colin, played on his violin, and directed our steps? Do you remember the little peasants Laurette and Adele? and how I offended you, Virginie, because I would dance with them on the evening of the fête of St. Roque?"

"Ah, my cousin!" replied Virginie, gently tapping his arm with a rosebud which she held in her hand, "you ever delighted in giving me pain."

"I ever delighted in the consciousness of not being indifferent to you, my Virginie," replied Victor.

Silence for a moment now followed, while Clermont, looking on the youthful pair before him, could scarcely conceal his feelings of pity; for he was persuaded that they loved each other; but, inasmuch as he also too well knew their principles, he could expect no happiness from such an union of hearts.

The silence was interrupted by Victor, who, as his expressive and fine countenance suddenly changed from grave to gay, exclaimed, "And do you remember, Virginie, our games of Colin Maillard in the great hall? and do you recollect how little Pauline used to shriek when she was caught, and how I was able to discover you from all the rest, though there were twenty others, and though you had blinded my eyes sevenfold?"

"O Victor!" said Virginie, "those were happy days; I wish they could return! O delightful hours of early youth! O happy scenes of thoughtless infancy, now, alas! for ever gone! I should experience more pleasure in beholding once again the two frowning black-and-white gable ends of the old château, which stood forward into the back court where I used to feed my turkeys and guinea-fowls, than in seeing the most sumptuous exhibition of noble architecture which the first palace in Europe could afford."

Victor replied by singing, with considerable pathos, a part of the well-known air called, "La Range des Vaches."

*“Quand reverrons dans un jour
Toutes les montagnes d’Alantour.”*

Both Victor and Virginie appeared much more softened and affected by these remembrances than Clermont had observed them ever to have been before, and seemed to feel so much regret at the departure of those days of childhood, and separation from the world, of which they spoke, that he judged the present to be a fit opportunity for addressing them upon that subject which was ever the nearest his own heart; and he accordingly embraced that season to point out to them that there was much deception in the idea commonly entertained of the happiness of childhood, and of past times in general. “In looking back,” said he, “on periods long gone by, we are apt to recollect those circumstances only which were pleasant, and to forget the many little painful events which continually disturb the peace of man on earth.” And he affirmed, also, what he felt persuaded to be the case, that man’s happiness depended not on any outward circumstances, but on his re-union with God, from whom he is naturally separated by sin. He described the appointed means of this re-union in as few words as possible, and he endeavoured to portray the peaceful, the blessed, the triumphant state of an old Christian, humbly waiting the period when his change should take place; and then he proceeded to draw a parallel between the situation of such a man and that of a child, whose happiness consists in want of reflection, or that of mere men of the world, whose peace must ever be liable to be marred by the fear of death, and by their uncertainty with respect to what must follow it.

Clermont had endeavoured to compress these sentiments in as few words as possible; but while he was speaking, he observed strong marks of impatience in the countenances of his auditors: Virginie looked down, and Victor’s features became flushed with anger. At length the young man spoke, and, using an oath too common in the mouths of Frenchmen, told Clermont he was fit company only for an old monk of the Chartreux. Then, arising abruptly, and drawing Virginie after him, he added an expression of a nature so profane, that Clermont, being penetrated with horror, also started from his seat, and, leaving the public situation in which he then was,

retired to a more solitary part of the wood, where, no doubt, he unburdened his soul in an address to that God whom he had been led to desire to love with all his soul, with all his mind, and with all his strength.

Shortly after the period lately spoken of, the family of the Comte de V—— returned to Paris; and Clermont, whose departure for England could not, from certain circumstances, take place for several weeks, was compelled to witness a new mode of life which was even less congenial with his feelings than that which he had seen at the château.

In the country he had indeed enjoyed many opportunities of withdrawing himself at times from society, and of communing with his Maker among the most beautiful works of that glorious God. For although nature had been twisted and tortured in the most cruel manner which could be imagined in the immediate vicinity of the château, where nothing was to be seen but stiff parterres, trim avenues, close bosquets, grottoes, and Chinese bridges, statues of dryads, fawns, and wood-nymphs; yet beyond this region of false taste were many exquisite scenes, where nature, being left at liberty, afforded some idea of what this fine country had once been when it was peopled by its ancient Celtic inhabitants, ere yet the primeval forests had yielded to the axe of the woodcutter, or the extensive lawn had been portioned into small patches for the use of the cottager. But when Clermont became an inmate of the Hotel de V——, in the Fauxbourg St. Honoré, he had no place to which he could withdraw where his ears were not assailed by the noise of this great city.

Those persons who have visited London and Paris must be sensible of striking and peculiar differences in the taste of the inhabitants of these famous capitals. There is a grand and noble simplicity in the plan of the former which must arrest every eye; and, though many parts of London (as of every city inhabited by the sinful race of man) are disfigured by want of cleanliness, and polluted by guilt, nevertheless, the new streets and the superior portions of that metropolis are free from mean and inferior ornaments. In them we find none of that affectation of the *rus in urbe* of which our continental neighbours are so fond, where stunted trees, parched

gravel walks, leafless arbours, and trim parterres, present nature to the eye in the character of Hagar in the desert, about to expire with thirst.

Paris, on the other hand, is an assemblage of tasteless palaces and mean houses, dried and withered gardens, dirty public walks, avenues of black trees, between ranges of little shops and an exceeding variety of ornaments, in bad taste themselves, and appearing with additional deformity from being injudiciously situated.

A totally new scene is, however, always imposing; and when Clermont first visited the gardens of the Tuilleries, which at that time were occupied by the emperor and his royal consort, Maria Louisa, of the house of Austria, his attention was powerfully arrested by the long reach of avenue, extending from the front of the palace, and through its stiff gardens, set forth with innumerable ancient statues, the Place Louis Quinze and the Champs Elyseés, till it was terminated, at a magnificent distance, by the gateway which is situated at the Barrier de l'Etoile.

It is not now my object to enter very particularly into a description of the mode of life that is led by persons of distinction in Paris. Suffice it to say, that at the period we speak of, as in the present time, nothing is less desired in that city than the pleasures of a domestic life. In the house of the Comte de V—, the family never met at breakfast, but each lady took her solitary meal in her own apartment, and, probably, even in bed. Sometimes, indeed, a male or female visitant might be permitted to take this meal with her; but this was deemed an affair of so little account, that it was perhaps known only to the femme de chambre of the lady herself, or to the lacquey who ushered the person through the anteroom. The gentlemen of the family generally took their breakfasts at some fashionable cafés, where they lounged away more than an hour, in reading the public papers of the day and enquiring after the news. Clermont expected that the hour of dinner would, of course, assemble the family; but the Comte de V— seldom had any dinner prepared in his house. His servants were on board wages; and it was at one of the fashionable restaurateurs near the court end of the town, that the ladies of the family, sometimes in company with the comte,

and sometimes attended by other gentlemen, partook of their necessary refreshment. The evenings were always devoted to amusements, of which there was an inconceivable variety. The theatres, the opera, balls of different kinds, public gardens, &c. &c. afforded a continual excuse for not staying at home: and Clermont now found it more difficult than ever to enjoy a moment's conversation with Virginie.

At length, however, finding that she did not object to receive company in her bed-chamber, he availed himself of the privilege, which he thought might more becomingly be allowed to a brother than to any other person; and he accordingly presented himself, one morning, at the door of her antechamber. Being introduced, he found her sitting at breakfast with a young lady of her acquaintance. Virginie blushed, and seemed embarrassed at the appearance of Clermont; but recovering herself, she soon became as sprightly as usual, and, with considerable archness, thanked him for the honour he had done her.

While the visiter was present, no particular discourse could take place between Virginie and Clermont: but, on her having taken leave, Clermont obliged his sister to sit down, after which, he fastened the door, and then entered into very close conversation with her. He spoke to her of what he had observed respecting Victor, and demanded of her what her views were with regard to him. "What are my uncle's intentions, Virginie?" he said; "I have a right to ask: does he mean to marry you to his son? You are of an age, my sister, when it is the custom, in this country, for young women to be settled; and I think that you ought now either to separate yourself from Victor, or to become his wife." Clermont concluded by offering her a home in England, and pressing her earnestly to accept it, having been authorized so to do by his paternal friend, the excellent Mr. Charlton.

Virginie seemed to shrink with a kind of instinctive horror from this proposal, and replied, without hesitation, that she would prefer death in France to life in England.

"Such words," said Clermont, "are easily spoken, Virginie; but you, who reject the comforts of religion, should be the last to speak of desiring death."

"Clermont," returned the young lady, again repeating her plea, "you and I are of dissimilar ways of thinking: you are an heretic, I am a Catholic: religion, therefore, had better be left alone between us."

"Were you a serious Papist, Virginie," replied Clermont, "I should be better satisfied with your state of mind than I am at present: but let me tell you, my sister, that the infidel expressions which you not unfrequently utter, would be as abhorrent in the estimation of a sincere Papist, as they are in mine. A Roman Catholic avows many tenets of which I totally disapprove; and yet I am persuaded that there is no serious man of that denomination who would not shudder at the contempt of God, and of the Saviour, which you not unfrequently express. But to leave this subject. My present business is to demand of you, what your views are respecting Victor."

The decided tone and manner with which Clermont spoke, forced from Virginie the confession, that she was strongly attached to Victor, and that she believed he preferred her before every other woman on earth; but that, as her fortune was small, her uncle did not desire their marriage: adding this information, that he had already taken several steps to bring about another union for his son, and also one for herself.

"And what," said the astonished Clermont, "are your intentions respecting this matter? Do you mean to submit to your uncle's wishes? What is Victor's determination?"

"Brother," replied Virginie, "wherefore do you concern yourself in this affair? Leave us to ourselves. We desire no interference. Our modes of thinking, as I said before, are altogether dissimilar: you have separated yourself from us by adopting heretical sentiments. Leave me to myself. You may make me more miserable, but you cannot contribute to my happiness, by interfering with our plans."

Clermont looked at her with a desire to read what was passing in her mind. The expression of her countenance was mysterious. "O Virginie, my sister!" he exclaimed, still gazing intently on her, "those who reject the guidance of their God, enter into dark and dreadful paths of which they know not the end. Be persuaded,

my sister! my beloved! daughter of my father! daughter of my mother! companion of my early infancy! Take your God for your guide; go to him through Christ; plead your Saviour's merits in your own behalf: and assuredly you will be set right; you will find comfort; you will receive pardon."

"Pardon!" said Virginie, "for what? What have I done?"

"Done!" repeated Clermont, looking earnestly upon her, "I have no particular suspicions of you; but I well know that you partake of a sinful nature in common with all mankind; and to the sin of your nature I know, also, that you have added that of open infidelity, and frequent blasphemy: for why should I not speak all that is in my mind?"

Virginie, during this conversation, had been violently agitated. Her countenance had varied repeatedly: and passion at length so powerfully influenced her, that, throwing herself back in her chair, she uttered a loud shriek, and fell into a kind of fit, in which her cries resounded through the house.

Clermont, grieved and astonished, rushed to the door to call for help, and in the antechamber he met Victor and the femme de chambre, together with others of the family, all of whom were alarmed by the cries of the young lady.

The first impulse of Victor was to hasten to Virginie, and take her in his arms. At the sound of his voice, she ceased to shriek, and melting into tears, laid her head on his shoulder; while he, with real anxiety, enquired the cause of her agitation: but as she gave no immediate answer, he looked furiously at Clermont, and asked him to account for his sister's distress.

"Willingly," replied Clermont; "but I must have no witnesses of what I shall say:"—and, as he spoke, he desired that the domestics, who had crowded in, might leave the room.

"Perhaps," said Victor, "you would rather choose to explain this matter in the Bois de Boulogne, or some other more private place?"

"This room," returned Clermont, calmly, "is sufficiently private, Victor. I will not affect to mistake your meaning: but, take it as you will, and come what will of

it, I now solemnly declare, that I never will imbrue my hands in the blood of any man. So God give me grace to keep this resolution!"

" You will not refuse then, Clermont," said Victor, somewhat more calmly, " to disclose what has passed between you and Virginie?"

" Certainly not," replied Clermont; " but I would rather that our conversation should have no witness." So saying, he led the way to his own apartment, and was followed by his cousin.

Clermont was not sorry at having this opportunity, which now presented itself for sounding the sentiments of Victor with regard to his sister. He hoped by this means to obtain some satisfaction in the affair. But although Victor listened to all that passed with considerable calmness, he made no answer from which his determination respecting Virginie could be understood. He did not deny that he loved Virginie, and that he had always loved her; and he expressed a wish that his circumstances were such as would render it in his power to supply her with every distinction which her virtues deserved: but he would enter into no explanation of his plans, or, rather, he seemed to express himself as one who had formed no plan of action, but was ready to be decided by any impulse of the moment.

Clermont, who through all these trying scenes was enabled to stand firmly to his Christian profession, missed not this occasion, on which he found Victor more serious than usual, of urging upon him the doctrines and duties of real religion: but, on the mere mention of this subject, the young man instantly became light and profane, and uttered several expressions so shocking to Clermont, that he thought it best to desist from pressing the matter any further. Thus, after having made every effort which he thought prudent with respect to his sister, this good brother was left in the same state of doubt as before with regard to her situation in reference to Victor, and he was also more strongly and painfully convinced of the infidel principles of both these his young relations.

In the mean time, Clermont beheld much in the conduct of his uncle and aunt, his cousin and sister, which grieved him. Both the comte and Victor spent nearly the whole of their time abroad, but not together.. They

seldom returned home till late at night, and sometimes not till near the morning; and if Clermont by chance met them during the day, they appeared to be absorbed in some concerns which they were not willing to impart to any other person. The comtesse was, in the mean time, wholly devoted to her own society and their peculiar amusements; and Virginie also had her chosen companions with whom she went abroad. If Clermont happened to meet with any of these his relations, it was always in a crowd, or in some scene of gaiety; and they always seemed glad to shake him off, and to see him engaged with other persons, or in other parts of the apartment in which they might chance to be assembled. The comtesse was the only person who appeared to take the least pleasure in his society; but such was the levity, coquetry, and want of delicacy in her manner, that Clermont was as uneasy in her company as his other connexions could be in his.

Thus passed some weeks: at the end of which period two persons were brought forward whom Clermont had reason to think were the individuals to whom the comte would have no objection to unite his son and his niece in marriage. The one was an extremely rich and gay widow of about twenty-five years of age; and the other was a middle aged man, of no family indeed, but possessing great wealth and considerable influence at court.

The first appearance of these persons in the presence of Clermont was at a supper given at the Hotel de V——; and it was, even at this first meeting, sufficiently apparent what were the views entertained by the comte.

During the repeated interviews which took place on various occasions after this supper, it became very evident that Madame de Blemont (the lady above mentioned) was perfectly satisfied with the appearance and fashionable air of Victor, and that Monsieur de Sainterre appeared equally pleased with Virginie; but Clermont was still unable to penetrate the intentions of his cousin and sister with respect to these proposed marriages, though he had frequently found them in close conversation with each other, and once heard his sister say, "If fortune would but favour us, Victor, we might yet be happy."

It was in vain that Clermont solicited the confidence

of Virginie; the young lady continued to avoid him: and he found that he only exposed himself to insults by attempting to enter into any particular conversation with his cousin. It might, however, be expected that Clermont, being naturally deeply concerned in the happiness of his sister, was no idle spectator of what was passing around him; and the more so, as he had few acquaintances in Paris, and none, in fact, who actually interested him.

In the mean time, the frequent and long-continued absences of Victor surprised him; and he had already begun to entertain considerable fears respecting them, when his uncle, one day, calling him aside, and addressing him with more affection than usual, said, "My dear nephew, I am very uneasy about my son. I greatly fear that he has lately taken to gamble, and that to an extent which threatens the total ruin of all his prospects."

Clermont heard this communication with more grief than surprise; and, after having expressed his sorrow on the occasion, he asked what he could do to assist his cousin.

"Watch him, my dear nephew," said the comte: "discover his haunts. Follow him; and endeavour, when you see him in danger, to extricate him from his evil companions, and to bring him home."

"Sir," replied Clermont, "although the service will not be an acceptable one to my cousin, I am ready to undertake it, and hope that I may be enabled to be useful to him. But O, my uncle!" he added, "if I might but presume to open my mind to you, I should entreat you to seek another and a more powerful friend for my cousin than such a one as I am. I should implore you to use the influence of a father, to induce him to seek a heavenly and omnipotent guide for his youth." Clermont then, with the same Christian firmness which he had evinced throughout his whole residence in France, ventured to state to his uncle the anxiety which he felt at the irreligious state of his family, and boldly predicting that destruction would inevitably be the consequence of this contempt of the divine power, he earnestly besought his uncle to press the obligations of religion on his children without further loss of time. He also took

occasion to point out to him the regard which subsisted between his son and Virginie, and to ask him wherefore he wished to separate two persons who had been so long and faithfully attached.

The comte took no notice of that part of Clermont's address which referred to religion; but, replying to the latter part of his appeal only, he said, "Clermont, you are, perhaps, unacquainted with the state of my affairs. Though living in the style that you see, I am a poor man; and it is necessary that my son should marry so as to support the honour of his family."

"Honour!" repeated Clermont, "what are earthly honours in comparison with happiness? O, my uncle! do not compel your son to make a sacrifice which, I am persuaded, is utterly repugnant to his feelings."

"Clermont, you mistake me," replied the comte; "I use no compulsion. Victor sees the necessity of the plans I propose as clearly as I do: and he is entirely acquiescent in the arrangement."

"Inconceivable!" replied Clermont. "These are things I cannot understand."

"Why not?" said the comte.

Clermont had long been aware that his relations possessed scarcely one idea, or one feeling, in unison with his own, and that, therefore, arguments between them were always unsatisfactory; as they had no common principles on which their reasonings might be founded. He therefore made no reply to the last question of the comte, but took his leave, with the assurance that he would do every thing that might be in his power to benefit his cousin in the way that had been pointed out.

In compliance with his uncle's request, when Victor was preparing to go out on that same evening, Clermont contrived to meet him at the door of the hall, and addressing him with apparent carelessness, he said, "If you are going out, cousin, I should like to accompany you; for I have hitherto lived almost as a stranger in this place, and should be glad to become somewhat more intimately acquainted with the humours of this gay city."

On hearing this, Victor laughed aloud, and replied, "How now, my good cousin? do you begin to be tired of the philosophic life that you have hitherto led? Come

on, then, and I will introduce you into the world; and henceforward we shall understand each other better than we have hitherto done, I make no question."

Clermont was shocked at the turn which Victor thus gave to his request, and, upon reflection, he saw that his proposal had been an injudicious one, and that it bore with it an appearance of inconsistency which, for the honour of religion, every Christian should carefully avoid. He was therefore at a loss what further to say, till Victor, observing his hesitation, seemed inclined to draw him forward to the carriage which was waiting in the court.

"Stop one moment, Victor," said Clermont. "On second thoughts, I find that I must not go with you. You have misunderstood me: I am not weary of the part which I have hitherto been enabled to choose; I desire still to lead an innocent life; and I pray that I may always be kept from falling into sin; and, as I daily ask of my God that I may not be led into temptation, so I am resolved not to throw myself into it. If, therefore," he added, smilingly, "if the company you keep, my cousin, is not that which you would recommend as suitable for such a philosopher as I am, I will not accompany you." So saying, he dropped Victor's arm, and the young man, laughing loud, instantly jumped into his carriage, and was driven out of the court.

Clermont, for a short time after the departure of Victor, stood upon the steps of the portico, considering what measures he ought next to take. "What," said he, "shall I do for this misguided and unprincipled young man? how am I to watch him? whither must I follow him? And yet I must not disregard my uncle's request. Am I myself able to withstand the trials to which I cannot but be exposed in seeking him through all the haunts of vice with which this profligate capital abounds? O my God, enlighten and influence my mind on this subject, and make me to know the path in which I should walk!" While uttering these last words, being perhaps directed by some secret influence from above, he descended the steps, crossed the court, and, passing under the gate, he presently found himself in the street.

Those who have traversed the capital of England at night, and have beheld it blazing, as it were, at that

time with the brightness of a second day, must not expect an appearance equally brilliant at the same hour in the streets of Paris.

The Rue St. Honoré is one of the principal streets in Paris; notwithstanding which, the houses are for the most part mean; and those few which are of a superior kind, stand back from the street, in courts, having lodges or gateways in the front. A few lamps, suspended in the centre from ropes which run across the streets, shed a dim and imperfect light upon the pavement, and hardly allow the passenger to distinguish the forms of the houses on each side.

Clermont passed along this gloomy street in haste, and, taking the shortest way to the Palais Royal, he arrived at the gate at the moment in which several carriages were wheeling away from it; and among these he plainly distinguished that which belonged to Victor. He called to the coachman, but was not heard: and now, having no doubt that his cousin might be found in some apartment of the buildings which surround the several courts of the palace, he passed beneath the archway which is at the entrance of the court, and which forms a part of the habitation of the Duke of Orleans, and from thence he proceeded, without loss of time, into the piazza on the left.

The Palais Royal, built by Cardinal Richelieu, in 1636, could formerly boast of a beautiful garden, planted with the greatest exactness and precision. It contained two lawns, symmetrically bordered by rows of trees. Between these lawns was a basin in the form of a crescent, surrounded by trellis work, with many niches, in which were placed statues. A magnificent avenue of tillenels, resembling a noble archway, encompassed the garden, and was terminated at the end by elms, so trimmed as to represent porticoes. At present, however, these gardens are entirely transformed, although a few dusky trees yet remain, and a fountain is still seen to play in the centre of the first court. Immense galleries and innumerable shops have now taken the place of the avenues of tillenel, and of the leafy piazzas and the shadowy bowers with which it was once adorned. Neither is this ancient abode of princes more changed in its outward appearance than it is with respect to its inhabitants. To

use the words of a modern writer, “The Palais Royal is now a kind of camera-obscura, in which a stranger might contemplate all Paris;” for in this place there is assembled, in one point of view, every vanity, every folly, and, we might add, every inducement to vice, which the mightiest capital of the earth could possibly afford. The buildings which surround the two courts of the Palais Royal are of considerable height, and consist of many stories. The ground-floor is composed of shops, or houses of restaurateurs, having before them a paved walk and open gallery; cafés and gambling-rooms occupy the second story; and a range of apartments under ground afford the like places of entertainment for persons of inferior rank. We forbear to enquire into the uses to which the upper apartments of these ranges of buildings are appropriated; for, to adopt the words of the same author whom we have just quoted, “there are, in certain pictures, parts which ought to be thrown into the shade.”

Into this place, such as we have partly described it, and such as we might further imagine it to be, Clermont now felt himself impelled by duty to enter, alone, and at that very hour when, under the covert of darkness, or by the merely dubious light of thinly scattered lamps, vice was stalking abroad, fearless and unreserved. Clermont, without any specific motive for his so doing, entered the piazza on the left, and passing on till he came to the wooden gallery which separates the two courts, he saw before him a figure which he thought resembled Victor. He accordingly followed the young man into the second court, where he disappeared through a doorway on the left. Clermont, though still at some distance, kept his eye fixed on this doorway, till, entering through it, he ascended a staircase which introduced him to an apartment called, *Le Café des Milles Colonnes*, one of the most celebrated in Paris, and here he immediately discovered that the young man whom he had followed was to him a total stranger. This apartment, notwithstanding its ostentatious appellation, was small, but it was adorned with many marble columns, which, being reflected by looking-glasses, judiciously arranged for the purpose, appeared to be multiplied beyond calculation, and thus seemed to entitle the room to its mag-

nificent characteristic, Des Milles Colonnes. The effect, however, of these arrangements was exceedingly bad; because the simplicity of the original idea was destroyed by several ill-judged ornaments, and various statues, in imitation of the antique, which were multiplied by the mirrors till the eye was wearied with the repetition.

But that which shocked the mind of Clermont more than any thing else in this place was a female of middle age and rather large dimensions, who was seated on an elevated chair of fine damask adorned with gold. She was placed with her back to a mirror, and had before her a marble table, on which were certain urns and vessels of gold.

This female appeared dressed with exquisite art, and the artificial rose and lily adorned her cheeks and neck. Clermont now remembered that he had heard Victor speak of this woman as being well known to him, and, therefore, revolting as it was to him to address a character of this description, he went up to her, and enquired whether she had seen the Chevalier de V—— during the evening.

Clermont's manner and appearance were those of a gentleman, and, as such, this person thought it worth her while to try to please him. In return to his question, she therefore assumed one of her most gracious smiles and softest cadences: but, after several coquettish circumlocutions, she was obliged to confess that she had seen nothing during that evening of the individual in question.

Nothing is more revolting to a mind agitated by strong emotions, and under the influence of virtuous feelings, than the unfeeling trifling of vicious characters. In consequence of this, it was with difficulty that Clermont could contain himself to hear her out, or even to answer with common politeness, so that, turning hastily round, he quitted this scene of vanity, and presently found himself again in the piazza.

I shall not accompany Clermont throughout all his wanderings during the course of this evening. Suffice it to say, that, at about one o'clock, he had almost determined to return to the Hotel de V——, when at the door of a restaurateur he met with a young man whom he had frequently seen in company with Victor. This

young man was not one whom Clermont would ever have made choice of as a companion: nevertheless, he was at this time glad to see him; and now, telling him that he was come in search of Victor, at the request of his father, he begged that, if it were in his power, he would direct him where to find him.

The young man replied, that he had not seen him during that evening; but added, that he could probably direct Clermont to a place where he might be found, as it was one of his usual haunts. Accordingly, the stranger conducted Clermont into one of the buildings on the right of the second square, and, taking him up several flights of stairs, he introduced him into a very large room, where a number of persons were engaged in games of hazard.

A deep silence reigned throughout the apartment when Clermont entered, (being introduced by the young gentleman above mentioned,) which silence was now and then broken by strong and sudden exclamations, expressive of violent but half-repressed emotion. Clermont walked quietly round the apartment, anxiously looking for Victor, who nowhere appeared; and he was just about to withdraw, eager to leave a scene which filled him with horror, when suddenly a violent altercation broke out at one of the tables, from which a young man, rising up, exclaimed, with a dreadful oath, "It is done! then I am lost!"

At the same moment, the young man who had uttered these words rushed towards the door; and, in an instant afterwards, the sound of a pistol in the passage, followed by that of a heavy fall upon the floor, struck dreadfully upon the ears of all present.

Every one in the apartment immediately arose; and many sprang forward to the door, insomuch that Clermont was unable to pass through the crowded doorway; but as he stood behind the throng, he heard the expiring groan of the miserable self-destroyer, and the exclamations of horror which immediately afterwards burst from every mouth.

Clermont remained in this scene of guilt and misery till he had ascertained that death had actually taken place; and then, being sick with horror, and faint with fatigue, he returned to the Hotel de V—, where his

first question to the porter was, “Is the chevalier returned? is my cousin in the house?”

Being relieved, in some degree, from his fears on Victor’s account, (which were now become excessive,) by the answer of the porter, who replied, that Monsieur had already been an hour in the house, Clermont went to bed, where he, however, found not the least degree of repose till the morning had begun to dawn, at which time he fell asleep; but it was a sleep in which all the horrors of the past night were represented anew to his mind.

It was eight o’clock when Clermont awoke from his troubled rest; and then rising and dressing in haste, he resolved that before Victor could possibly leave the house he would seek him, and make one more attempt to persuade him to renounce that mode of life, the end of which, if pursued, would, he doubted not, be similar to the fate of that miserable young man whose death he had the night before witnessed. Influenced by this resolution, he stationed himself in a centre apartment of the hotel, through which he was aware that Victor must pass in order to go out: and there he waited for a considerable time, sometimes throwing his restless limbs on a sofa which was situated in the apartment, and sometimes pacing the room with hasty steps; his mind, during this painful interval, being incessantly engaged in prayer; but it was that kind of heartfelt exercise which those only can practise and appreciate who have lived in habitual and intimate union with their God.

More than an hour had thus elapsed before Victor appeared. He came out from his chamber in such a dress as indicated that it was his intention instantly to go out. But though he was attired with evident care, his face was pale, and there was a certain wildness in his manner which too plainly bespoke the disorder and agitation of his mind. At the sight of Clermont he started, and looked as if he would gladly have avoided him: but Clermont was in that state of high excitement which inspires the most timorous with courage, and which gives boldness to the most reserved. He instantly advanced towards Victor, on his first appearance, and entered without ceremony into the detail of all his views and apprehensions respecting him.

During the course of this history, I have found it necessary to repeat many conversations at some length. I now therefore forbear to enter into the particulars of that which took place between Clermont and Victor on the present occasion; because in so doing, I should be compelled to repeat many arguments that have been already adduced. I shall therefore content myself by simply stating the general heads of this conversation.

Clermont began by expressing his uneasiness at the habitual and mysterious absence of his cousin from home; and he stated that he was well acquainted with the fact of his frequenting gambling-houses; he also acknowledged that he had gone into one on the night before, expecting to find him there. He then informed him of the dreadful scene that he had there witnessed; and proceeded, in a manner at once exceedingly warm and affectionate, to point out to his cousin the inevitable consequences of a vicious course of conduct, both in the present world and in that which is to come.

Although Clermont's discourse was protracted to a considerable length, Victor heard him out, and seemed to be affected by many of his arguments. But at the moment that he ceased to speak, the unhappy young man arose without making any other reply than a simple declaration that he felt his cousin's kindness, and then fetching a deep sigh, he walked back to his own apartment, in which he presently shut himself up. Clermont flattered himself that he might take this action as a token for good; and new hopes with regard to his misguided cousin were beginning to arise in his breast, when his sister entered the saloon by a door at the further end, but on seeing her brother she immediately started, and seemed half inclined to draw back.

"Virginie," said Clermont, "you appear surprised and agitated at seeing me here. Will you not, however, allow me a moment's hearing? Though I am your nearest relation, you continually shun me; you look upon me as your enemy; and, instead of making me the confidant of your sorrows, you shrink with horror when you behold me."

"My sorrows!" repeated Virginie: "what would you insinuate, Clermont? why do you suppose that I have any particular afflictions?"

"I have no desire," returned Clermont, "to extort a

confidence which is continually refused me. But let us not now speak of our own concerns, Virginie: it is Victor of whom we must think at present."

"Victor!" she reiterated, turning pale, and trembling excessively; "what do you fear for Victor?"

"Every thing," said Clermont. "He is an infidel, and a gambler; and what may we not expect from such an one? O Virginie! my sister! you know not what dangers you incur when you reject the divine teachings, and refuse the deference due from the creature to the Creator! The Lord forbid that I should ever experience in my own mind the darkness and horror of infidelity: nevertheless I can, in some measure, conceive what it is; and I never wonder at any act of desperation, however dreadful, of which such persons are guilty."

"What do you mean, Clermont? what do you allude to?" said Virginie.

"This, my sister, is the meaning of what I would say," returned Clermont, "that unless you can discover some means of dissuading Victor from his present course of life, and unless the divine mercy interposes to awaken him from his delusive dream of infidelity, I look forward to some dreadful catastrophe, of which I dare not now even think."

Virginie became still more pale; and sunk back on a sofa, sighing bitterly.

"O my sister!" said Clermont; "better would it have been for you, and for our unhappy cousin, that you had died in your cradles, while yet you were incapable of raising your impious voices against the majesty of your Creator. O my God! my God!" he added, clasping his hands, and directing his eyes upwards, "have mercy on these young people. Open their eyes, ere it is yet too late, to a sight of the heinous crime of unbelief of which they are guilty; and deliver them, O Lord, through thy free and unmerited grace, from the sure consequences of their transgressions."

Virginie interrupted her brother in the midst of these his devout ejaculations, to ask him what were his particular fears on Victor's account. "He is now in the house," she said; "for I was told that he came in last night, and that he then appeared as usual. What then do you particularly apprehend?"

Clermont now informed his sister of all that had passed between his uncle and himself on the last evening, and he also laid before her the detail of his visit to the Palais Royal, and he particularly mentioned the dreadful scene that he had witnessed in the gambling-house.

"And why should you suppose that Victor is in danger of imitating this miserable man?" said Virginie.

"Because he exposes himself amidst the same circumstances of risk," returned Clermont, "and he rejects those comforts and restraints of religion by which alone the mind of man is soothed in affliction, and his passions are controlled in the moment of high and otherwise overpowering excitement."

Virginie, though pale and trembling, affected to smile at these fears, and said, "Brother, you alarm yourself without sufficient cause; this is not Victor's first introduction into the world; he plays with judgment; he is not rash; and I conclude, that it is more probable that he may acquire a fortune, which will set him above the necessity of the odious match that is now contemplated for him, than that he will inconsiderately become the means of his own ruin."

On hearing this remark, Clermont, who, during the last few minutes, had been pacing the apartment with hurried steps, as if thereby to relieve the perturbation of his spirits, stood still before his sister, and looking intently at her, he exclaimed, "And is it so? do I now understand this mystery? It was all inexplicable before. O miserable Virginie! The thing is then done; and you yourself will be the destruction of the man whom you love."

The argument between Virginie and her brother now assumed a new aspect, by which he endeavoured to convince her of the danger and impiety of attempting to control her own future circumstances by the encouragement of measures so unlawful. And he availed himself of this opportunity to point out the blessedness of the state of that man, who, having resigned himself, both his soul and body, into the hands of his God, is thereby delivered from every anxious care respecting his subsequent situation in life; having thus been enabled to cast all his care upon him who careth for him.

Virginie impatiently heard her brother speaking on

this subject; and then she recurred to her old plea, that as he was a heretic, and she a Catholic, it was therefore impossible that they could agree on matters of religion: and though Clermont pressed her to hear what he had further to say, she arose and withdrew to her apartment.

Clermont, being now again left alone, began to consider what he should next do for Victor; and contemplated with anguish the little prospect that he had of serving him effectually: for he felt convinced that if the young man was still resolved to continue in the ruinous course upon which he had entered, it would be impossible for him, either by watching him, or by any other means, to preserve him from the effects of his own rashness. He resolved, however, to do what he could in order that he might thus save himself from after reflections of self-reproach in case that which he most feared should eventually take place: he therefore continued at home during the whole of the morning; and finding that Victor did not attempt to go out, Clermont felt his mind somewhat relieved by the circumstance.

In the evening, the comtesse was to give an entertainment: and, as Madame de Blemont was expected to be present, there was no doubt entertained that Victor would be at home.

When Clermont entered the saloon in the evening, he found it illuminated with great splendour and brilliancy, which, however, ill agreed with the real character and the well-known feelings of every individual of the family that was to receive the guests. The apartment was furnished with cassolettes, which, being now lighted up, exhaled all the perfumes of the East. Several persons were already arrived. Clermont was rejoiced to see his cousin Victor elegantly dressed, standing among a group of young ladies, and conversing with gaiety. Virginie soon afterwards approached the little circle: but there was a sadness in her air which she seemed in vain endeavouring to conceal. She stood for a moment beside her cousin, and their eyes met with an expression which Clermont was destined never to forget. She then passed on; and Clermont observed that Victor looked after her as she retreated; and he thought that he sighed: but rousing himself in a moment afterwards, he resumed his seeming gaiety.

Presently the crowd in the saloon became such, that it was found desirable to disperse the circle of ladies, and to distribute them around the tables for play.

When the tables were arranged, some of the persons who were disengaged passed forward into the gallery, which also was illuminated. In this gallery they had placed a harp; and several ladies gathered themselves round this harp, while one began to play. The air which was first chosen was an English one; and the lady, on being asked to sing, confessed that she had forgotten the words, which were English.

Some one present then said, "We have an English gentleman here, who perhaps can refresh your memory: and Clermont was in consequence called. The young man was too polite to advance any objection against complying with this call, especially when pressed by the comtesse: but, before he left the saloon, he requested that lady not to lose sight of Victor, but if he went out of the room, immediately to inform him of the circumstance.

It was some time before Clermont could persuade the young ladies who were gathered round the harp that he was unable to assist them in recalling the song, and perhaps more than half an hour had passed before he could extricate himself from their importunities, which were particularly annoying to him at this time, when his mind was so fully engaged and agitated by other matters: but when he had returned to the saloon, he looked in vain for Victor; and was surprised to see the comtesse so deeply engaged in play, that it was probable she had utterly forgotten the interests of her son-in-law in her attention to her own more immediate concerns. Clermont immediately applied to the servants, who were waiting in the antechamber; and being told by them that his cousin had gone out only a few minutes before, he hastened into the court without loss of time, and made the same demand of the *Suisse* at the gate.

Clermont, as I before said, was fully aware of the fruitlessness of any attempts of his to save a profligate young man who was bent on his own destruction; nevertheless, he was determined (the Lord assisting him) to do what he could for him: he accordingly hastened into the street, engaged the first *fiacre* he could meet with, and proceeded to the Palais Royal.

As we have, in description, followed Clermont in his pursuits through these mazes of vice and folly during the past night, we judge that our reader will not require either a repetition of the same account, or the detail of another so little varied that it cannot be supposed to afford any additional information. Suffice it to say, that the sun was already rising when Clermont returned, fatigued and dispirited, to the Hotel de V——, having sought Victor in every place where he thought it at all probable that he might be found, though his own comparative ignorance of the town added not a little to his difficulties on this occasion.

He had enjoyed scarcely any rest during the two past nights; and when told, on his arrival, that Victor was not returned, though he was now excessively fatigued, his slight inclination to sleep totally left him. He, however, withdrew to his apartment, changed his dress, and in much agitation devoted some moments to earnest prayer.

At eight o'clock he again left his room, and on going into the saloon, he found every thing in that disordered and comfortless state, which is usual in every mansion on the morrow after some great festivity. Chairs and tables, cards and counters, were scattered in the utmost confusion through the apartments, and a faint and oppressive odour exhaled from the vases of perfume, though the fire which had caused the exhalations on the preceding evening was now extinguished.

Clermont unclosed the shutters, and threw open a window. The fresh air being admitted into the room, dispelled the sickly odours of the exhausted perfumes. He sat down on a sofa, and presently became deeply absorbed in thought, till at length, being utterly worn out by fatigue, he fell asleep in the attitude in which he sat.

It was eleven o'clock when the comte entered the saloon. His step awakened Clermont, and his question, "Do you know any thing of Victor?" thoroughly aroused him.

Clermont told the comte how he had spent the night; and this account heightened the father's agitation to such a degree, that they both agreed to go out together immediately to seek for the young man.

As the comte, of course, knew more of Paris, and of the places likely to be frequented by a young man devoted to gambling, than his nephew did, there was reason to expect that the search for Victor, when conducted by him, would be more successful.

Clermont and the comte had visited many well-known haunts of the lovers of high play, both in the Palais Royal and in other parts of the town, before they met with the least tidings of Victor.

At length they were informed by a young gentleman, an acquaintance, that the Chevalier de V—— had been seen, at an early hour of the preceding night, in a house in the Fauxbourg St. Germaine; that he had engaged deeply in play, and had suffered losses, but to what amount the young gentleman either could not, or perhaps would not, say.

This information greatly increased the alarm of the comte, and tended also to augment the fears of Clermont. The uncle and nephew, therefore, immediately repaired to the house above mentioned, but they could gain no further information than that Victor had left it at about three o'clock in the morning.

It was five o'clock in the afternoon when the comte and Clermont returned to the Hotel de V—— with the faint hope of finding Victor there. They found the comtesse and Virginie in the saloon: the latter was evidently in deep distress, pale and silent; and the comtesse was in vain endeavouring to comfort her with those commonplace topics of consolation which are in fact the best which worldly persons can supply. When the comte informed them of the result of their search, and expressed his fears that some unhappy consequence had resulted from Victor's loss, Virginie cast a look of mingled terror and shame at her brother, and then exclaiming, "Oh, Victor! Victor!" she sunk back in a state of total insensibility upon the sofa on which she was sitting.

Clermont felt himself unable to bear the sight of his sister's anguish; and the very knowledge of the infidel and consequently utterly comfortless state of her mind rendered his feelings on her account even still more intolerable. He was already in a fever, through anxiety and fatigue; but being perfectly regardless of his own feelings, he determined to renew his search for his cousin,

and to return no more till he could bring tidings of the unhappy young man.

Were we again to accompany Clermont in his midnight wanderings through the streets of Paris, we should only have to describe a variety of bitter feelings which occupied his mind—feelings greatly increased by the view of that thoughtlessness and vice in others, the dreadful consequences of which he had already begun to apprehend in all its horrors as awaiting his uncle's family.

Clermont had, during the last forty-eight hours, become better acquainted with the situation of the different houses of public resort in Paris than he would have been, according to his usual mode of living, during as many years' residence in that capital. He had once again visited all those places to which he had accompanied his uncle in the morning, but with no better success. The morning light was faintly dawning on the city when Clermont found himself beneath that front of the Louvre which looks towards the Seine. The night air was chilly, and the mind of Clermont was in that state of stupor which commonly follows any violent emotion; a state which, in an irreligious mind, partakes of the nature of despair, but which, in a pious spirit, still retains that sweet and heartfelt confidence which enables the Christian, under the most severe trials to which human nature is liable, to say, “I know in whom I have believed.”

Clermont proceeded along the banks of the river towards the Pont Neuf. It was three o'clock in the morning: the season was summer. The whole city was buried in a profound stillness; the streets were deserted and silent, and, to use the language of a modern celebrated writer, they resembled the long galleries of a funereal monument. All were asleep but those characters whose evil purposes kept them awake, and who were silently skulking amid the shadows of the night in search of their prey.

Clermont still advanced, and soon found himself in the front of an hotel of a fine appearance, illuminated as for a gala. Many carriages, belonging to private persons, were arranged within the court, and a line of hackney-coaches waited at the door. Clermont stood still near this spot, a faint hope rising in his mind that he might here find Victor. The company was breaking up,

as Clermont presently observed by the motion of the carriages within the court. He placed himself where he might best examine those who went out, and he soon became persuaded that these persons had been engaged in the same desperate games of chance which, he greatly feared, had effected the ruin of his cousin. Some of them, in going out, abused their servants with bitterness; others spoke to them with that disgusting familiarity which bespeaks a mind thrown from its balance by undeserved success; others laughed aloud; and others muttered curses between their teeth.

As the carriages began to move, the noise became confused and indistinct; but Clermont, still intent on one object, watched each countenance as closely as possible, until, at length, being convinced that Victor was not of the company, he turned away, and proceeded in his search.

It was now four o'clock. Clermont entered upon the Pont Neuf, and stood awhile, leaning on the parapet, eyeing with vacant gaze the outline of the buildings to the right and left of the river, as this outline appeared marked upon the horizon by the faint light of the dawning day.

From this place he could see the palaces of kings and the humble dwellings of the little merchant; and beneath him were multitudes of boats and larger vessels, whose occupants were just beginning to rouse themselves. "Oh!" exclaimed Clermont, lifting up his eyes towards heaven, "another night of misery is past, and the sun again rises in all its glory on this infidel city! Ah, unhappy country! Oh, land of my fathers! how long wilt thou deny thy God? how long will thy sons persist to reject the fountain of living waters, and hew unto themselves broken cisterns, which will hold no water?"

Clermont then thought of his own happy and peaceful childhood, of his paternal friend in England, and of that divine mercy by which he had been made to differ from too many of his countrymen, and led betimes to understand and feel the consolations of religion. "O my God!" said he, "what is man without thee? and what is hell but separation from thee? May I henceforth be assisted to love and serve thee with every faculty of my soul and body! May my business and my pleasure be to

promote thy worship!" He ceased to pray, for at this moment a thought glanced across his mind, a thought which, though indistinct and unformed, filled his heart with comfort.—" May I not," said he, " at some future time, be in one way or another devoted to the religious instruction of my country? I have heard of David Brainerd, of Swartz, and others, who have laid themselves out for the instruction of the savages of America, and of the heathen in the East: and Oh, France! Oh, my country! dost thou not need the labours of the missionary more than these dwellings of the unlettered savage?—thou who once knewest thy God and Saviour, and hast now departed from thy first love?"

For a short time, the mind of Clermont was led away by this train of thought from the more immediate concerns which had lately occupied him: soon, however, recollecting himself, he turned from the parapet, and stood for a moment, considering whither next he should go. During this momentary period of reflection, his mind passed, as it were, over every street in the great capital in the centre of which he stood. "Victor!" he exclaimed, "I have sought thee every where among the living: art thou among the dead? O my unhappy cousin! where shall I find thee?" A dreadful idea then shot across his mind; and, irresistibly impelled by this idea, he instantly sought La Place du Marche Neuf.

We now again proceed to quote from the celebrated author to whom we have already more than once referred during the course of this narrative.

" Of all the public establishments of this capital," says this writer, " La Morgue is that, the destination of which presents to the mind the most painful and revolting idea. The name of it even is unknown to the greater part of the inhabitants of Paris: and among the small number of those who know the situation and design of this sad inclosure, undoubtedly there are very few who have had the strength of mind to approach it. Destruction and death there present themselves wearing the most hideous aspects. There the spectator does not behold the calm and decent melancholy of the tomb, the pious, and often pleasingly mournful spectacle of the funeral ceremony; neither have we there the imposing, though terrible ideas conveyed to us which the field of battle presents to the

lover of martial glory; but we behold in La Morgue the naked and sanguinary image of suicide, murder, assassination, and despair. There death appears in all its horror.

"I still remember," continues the same author, "the first impression which the view of this terrible place made upon me. I was going out from the college, and I followed a crowd of people who were passing under the vaults of the ancient chatelet; curiosity impelling me forward, at it also did my companions.

"Beneath the foundations of that gothic tower, the last remains of a palace, said to have been built by Cæsar, there is, on the left, a deep air-hole formed in the ancient building, which admits a few rays of light into a subterraneous chamber adjoining the lower gaol. Through the grates of this aperture I was enabled to introduce my head; and there I saw the body of a young female, the extreme paleness of which detached itself as a ray of light from the deep shades which surrounded it.

"La Morgue has been transferred, for some years past, to a building constructed for the purpose, upon the Place du Marche Neuf. This edifice, which stands alone on the extremity of the Pont St. Michel, is of a form suitable with its destination: its roof presents the appearance of an antique tomb; its architecture is severe; and the distribution of its apartments simple and commodious. The entrance is through a spacious porch, which separates two halls, one of which is appropriated to anatomical investigations, and the other to the exposure of the bodies which are brought there. The first of these halls is interdicted to the public, and windows of unpolished glass render it inaccessible to the eye of the passenger. The other is shut by a cloister of glass, which admits a view into the interior. Large openings in the stone-work, which are never filled up, and yet are not observable to the eye, continually admit the air, and illuminate the building throughout its whole extent. Within the second chamber, and parallel with the windows, on an oblique plane, are placed tablets of black marble, on which the dead are exposed, while their garments are hung upon the wall. The most retired part of this building serves for a habitation of the person charged with the care of this dreadful place."

Thus we have been enabled to introduce an accurate description of this edifice, another for purposes similar to which has yet never been known, and which we trust will never be required in any other part of the world. For let it be remembered, that until the infidel inhabitants of the capital of the French nation rejected their God and renounced their Saviour by a national decree, this superb temple for the self-murderer was not found necessary: and although in every country some unhappy individuals may have existed who have been guilty of this soul-ruining crime, still these instances are very rare, and might frequently be attributed to bodily disorder, which affecting the brain, deprives the individual of every power of self-control. Yet there is no country besides France, in which it is become a common practice for every person who has rendered his life burdensome to himself by his crimes, to terminate it by a violent and self-inflicted death.

But to leave these reflections, which might otherwise lead us too far, and proceed with our narrative.—Clermont had heard of La Morgue. He knew its situation and the purposes to which it was devoted. And no sooner did the dreadful idea enter his mind, that he might there perhaps find the corpse of the unhappy young man whom he had long sought in vain, than he hastened to the place, in a state of feeling which might be more easily conceived than expressed.

The part of the city to which Clermont was going, was one that he had never before visited; and as, at that early hour, he did not meet with any person in the street, who could direct him, he took a more circuitous course than was necessary; and, in consequence, did not arrive at the Place du Marche Neuf until the sun had arisen above the horizon, and it had become perfectly light.

Clermont was not long before he discovered the building that he was seeking, it being sufficiently indicated to a casual observer by its peculiar construction. He started with apprehension at the sight, but advanced instantly toward the portico.

As he entered this gloomy edifice, an excessive trembling agitated his whole frame, and the violent beating of his heart almost deprived him of breath. Still, however,

he proceeded, and, passing onward to the most remote part of the vestibule, he looked through the windows of the hall that was destined for the reception of the bodies of those wretched individuals who, having committed suicide, have been found by persons to whom they are unknown, and he saw with horror a corpse extended on one of the marble slabs. For a moment he looked and doubted; but the next instant produced the dreadful certainty, that he had at length found Victor where he had least desired to see him.

The unhappy young man, after having spent many hours at the gambling-table, had at length thrown himself into the river, being reduced to despair by his great losses; and though the body had been taken up within an hour, it was too late to restore life; and therefore, as Victor was unknown to those about him, he had been consigned to that place of shame and abandonment in which his cousin found him.

There are some scenes which may be met with in human life, and some emotions experienced by the mind, to which it would be utterly impossible to do justice by any description which could be given: and such were the circumstances of the present occasion, on which Clermont first became convinced that it was actually the body of his miserable cousin which he now beheld, pale, disfigured, and extended on the cold black marble within the walls of La Morgue. Such were his feelings, that a considerable time had elapsed before he recollected himself. A violent flood of tears at length came to his relief; and the voice of the *concierge*, who had been for some time addressing him, though he knew it not, was the first occurrence which brought him to his recollection.

"Apparently, Sir," said this man, who, from his situation, was grown callous to ordinary scenes of woe, "you know that unhappy gentleman? The body has lain here for some hours. It seems he drowned himself. Though taken up soon afterwards, all life was extinct when he was brought hither."

"May I be permitted," said Clermont, "to go into the hall, and once again to take hold of that hand which so lately was warm with life?"

The *concierge* opened the door of the chamber of

death. A faint earthy smell was perceptible, and the air struck cold and damp to his feelings. The same kind of stupor which had before come upon Clermont, now again took possession of his mind; and under its influence he advanced, with apparent composure, to the side of the corpse, and stood for a while with his arms folded, and his eyes fixed on the well-known features, which were less changed than might have been expected from the manner of the unhappy young man's death. But who would pretend to express the thoughts which engaged the mind of Clermont as he stood by the last cold couch of Victor? Yet he was, perhaps, incapable of reflection, though his heavy groans betrayed his deep distress.

In this manner I know not how long he might have stood, had he not been interrupted by several voices, in accents of terror, which suddenly broke in upon the silent scene. Clermont unconsciously turned towards the door, when, who can conceive his feelings on beholding his sister enter, followed by his uncle, while several servants appeared in the back-ground? The unhappy father, at the sight of Clermont, whose presence in that place but too certainly confirmed the dreadful report which had by that time reached the Hotel de V—— of the awful death of his only son, shrunk back and fainted in the arms of his servant. But Virginie advanced. Her cheek was coloured, not as formerly with an artificial glow, but with the flush of frenzy, excited by that false spirit which sometimes supports the ardent mind of youth in the moment of the severest trial. Her long hair had escaped from its accustomed confinement, or perhaps had been torn down by her own hands, and floated wildly over her shoulders. She came up close to the side of the corpse, and there standing for a moment, she thus addressed it: "Ah! yes! it is my Victor! my beloved! and here, here," she added, laying her hand on that cold hand which Clermont had removed from under the sheet by which the body was covered, "here I make that vow which shall unite us for ever. For ever, in this awful moment, in this dreadful place, I bind myself to you, my Victor: for you have been my first and only love."

So saying, she pressed her lips on the damp forehead

of the corpse, and again addressed that cold corpse with every word which despair and love might be supposed to dictate. Then with a motion too sudden and unexpected to allow of any interference, she drew a dirk or dagger from beneath her clothes, and struck it into her bosom.

Clermont, instantly awakened by this action from his stupor, called aloud for help, and, with one arm, catching his sister round the waist, as she was falling to the ground, he, with his other hand, seized her arm.

"Let me alone!" she exclaimed, with furious eagerness, "I will die with him; I have sworn it, and I will die." Then, with a vehement struggle disengaging her arm, she struck the dagger a second time into her breast.

The *concierge* and the servants were now all gathered round, while Clermont was still holding her. After the last violent effort, her hand quitted its grasp, and the dagger, which fell at the same moment to the pavement, was now, as it were, swimming in the blood which poured from the wounds.

"Help! help!" cried Clermont, as he pressed his open hand upon his sister's side, thus endeavouring to close the wounds, and stop the amazing effusion of blood. "Oh! my sister! Help! help! or she dies!"

A surgeon soon appeared, but his skill was ineffectual. Virginie had completed the work that she sought to accomplish; and, before the surgeon entered, her breath had grown fainter; her pulse had nearly ceased to beat; her pale features had become convulsed, and her eyes set; and, after a few short moments more, her spirit departed with three deep sighs at awful intervals.

"Oh, Virginie! Oh, Victor!" said Clermont, as he pressed his lips upon those of his sister, still warm with departing life, "now—now—now, but for religion, but that I have my God for my help, I would rush from this abhorred life as you have done, and take my place on the cold earth by your side." So saying, he hurried from the scene, passed by his uncle without seeing him, and fell senseless on the steps of the vestibule.

There were so many persons, acquaintances of the unhappy family, that were by this time gathered round this place of death, that succour was presently administered

to Clermont. He was taken up and carried to the Hotel de V—; where a long illness, and a temporary derangement of intellect in consequence, relieved him from the many dreadful mental images which otherwise must necessarily have followed these miserable events.

During this illness, Clermont was often visited by Madame de V—, who shewed him many kind attentions; but never once, as he could recollect, by his uncle. It was long, however, before he was in circumstances to make any particular enquiries. At length, however, having perfectly recovered his recollection, he one day ventured to ask the comtesse after her husband, and to enquire of her concerning the state of his spirits.

"My dear Clermont," said Madame de V—, "the comte is wonderfully composed; he has endured his afflictions like a wise man and a philosopher; he has filled every one who knows him with admiration."

"A philosopher!" said Clermont. "Can philosophy enable a man to sustain afflictions of this kind with composure?"

"My dear friend," returned the comtesse, with that invariable levity from which she never departed, "you do not know the power of true philosophy, nor what it enables a man to do and to suffer. The comte has, as I before remarked, astonished all Paris; and he is at this moment more collected and fitter for public business than he perhaps ever was during his life."

"But did he not at first," said Clermont, "that is, immediately after that most horrible, most unspeakably horrible day, did he not then sink? did his philosophy then support him?"

"He felt as a father," replied the comtesse, "as a father amidst the most dreadful circumstances in which a father could be placed. But he did not obtrude his feelings on others. He shut himself up in his own apartment, and did not appear till he could do so with that composure which, on the part of his friends, precluded all attempts at condolence."

"And has he," said Clermont, "been able to maintain this appearance with any degree of consistency?"

"He has," said the comtesse; "I rejoice to say that he has; and that he now goes through all his duties both as a private man and as a statesman precisely as he

formerly did. Neither have his affairs suffered any more than a temporary derangement from the dreadful accident to which you allude."

"Wonderful, indeed!" said Clermont. "How am I to understand this? If my uncle continues happy amidst such inexpressibly dreadful circumstances, I must never again question the power of philosophy to ensure the felicity of man."

The comtesse smiled, and hinted that philosophy had often been known to do more than religion itself for human nature.

Clermont shook his head. "These things," said he, "are to me inexplicable."

"You doubt my assertion respecting your uncle, Clermont," said the comtesse, again smiling. "Well, be it so. I trust that you will soon be able to leave your room, and again to join our family party. You will then be an eyewitness of the triumphant manner in which the Comte de V—— has borne himself up above the malice of fortune."

She then proceeded to inform Clermont of their future plans. She told him that the comte, through the friendship of the emperor, had procured a diplomatic situation at a northern court, and that it was, therefore, his intention to leave Paris in a very few weeks, in order to repair thither. She also acquainted Clermont of her intention to accompany her husband; and she spoke of this her determination to leave Paris as a mighty sacrifice which it demanded the utmost effort of female courage to make.

There thus appeared to be, in the manner of the comtesse, such a perversion of common sense, such an evident straining at trifles, and so light a mode of speaking of the most distressing afflictions to which human nature is liable, that Clermont felt utterly at a loss how to carry this conversation any further. His heart sickened at the recollection of the dreadful scene within the walls of La Morgue; and he could hardly conceive it possible that the tombs of Virginie and Victor should scarcely be washed by a single tear. Affected with this thought beyond all power of control, he leaned his head against the arm of the sofa on which he sat, and burst into an agony of sorrow, which, for a short time, effectually put an end to the unfeeling impertinences of the comtesse.

A few days after this, Clermont, feeling his strength sufficient for the effort, left his chamber, and made his appearance in the saloon at the moment when he knew that his uncle and aunt were engaged with company. He chose this opportunity, in order that the presence of other persons might prevent the necessity of any particular address to his uncle.

It was evening, and the party were engaged in conversation, and sitting in a small circle, when Clermont entered. At the sight of him the comtesse uttered an expression of pleasure, and the whole party arose.

Clermont was pale and thin, and still weak from the influence of his late very severe sufferings. As he advanced, his head began to swim, and his knees failed him. The comtesse ran towards him, gave him the support of her arm, and led him into the midst of the circle, where she placed him on a sofa.

In this situation, in this place, where Clermont had so often seen the miserable pair whose terrible end was ever present to his mind, the young man found himself, for a few moments, unable to speak, to look up, or to take the least notice of the compliments that were paid him on his amendment in health, by the persons around him.

"Come, come, my friends," said the comtesse, who had observed the state of Clermont's feelings with a quickness not unusual in persons of her nation, "let us leave our invalid to himself for a few moments, and talk of other things. Your kindness overpowers him. Let me see. What were we speaking of before this agreeable surprise? O! the first representation of the last new comedy! and you were saying that Talma surpassed himself in the hero."

With the assistance of the first representation of the new comedy and the surprising efforts of Talma, Clermont had time given him to recover himself. He gradually looked up, and turned his eyes towards his uncle, eager to read the expression of his countenance; hoping, notwithstanding the assertion of the comtesse to the contrary, that he might there observe some little indications of that brokenness of spirit, which, humanly speaking, often proves a kind of preparation for the introduction of better things. The comte happened at that moment to be looking at the person who was expatiating in praise

of the reigning favourite of the drama; and, therefore, Clermont had an opportunity of contemplating him for a length of time without being observed. The comte had been handsome, and his countenance prepossessing: but, as is common with persons of his nation in middle age, his features had become strongly marked, and his complexion, which had once been a clear and glowing brown, was now grown sallow and swarthy. Strong and decisive as was every line of his face when Clermont first knew him a few months past, he at this time perceived a remarkable difference in them, and every furrow now appeared deeply graven and fast fixed as in a figure of stone or brass. An expression of unutterable melancholy was remarkable in his dark eye; and not the slightest variation of countenance took place during the whole time in which he remained under the observation of his nephew's eye.

At length he spoke. His voice was strong and sonorous as usual, and his style clear and connected. He even seemed for a moment to grow warm with his subject, and spoke with emphasis; but still not even the slightest symptom of that animation or illumination of countenance, which commonly appears more or less in the face of every human being in conversation, was visible on the features of this unhappy man: and Clermont could not help inwardly saying, "Victor, Victor, thou art not forgotten! Whatever the careless world may think, thy ruin has sunk like lead upon thy father's heart."

After several severe struggles with himself, Clermont addressed his uncle, putting some question to him relative to the subject which happened at that time to constitute the matter of discourse of the company. At the sound of his voice, which Clermont had endeavoured to make as easy as possible, the comte turned round, looked full upon him, and answered with perfect apparent calmness, but with a distant and polite reserve, such as a man would use towards an entire stranger.

By degrees the conversation of the company became more animated. Several persons present hazarded certain witty expressions; Madame de V—— laughed aloud; and Clermont endeavoured to smile. But no change passed on the features of the comte. The

strong lines of his face seemed set for ever, and refused to relax into the least tendency towards a smile; and Clermont felt that this unhappy man was, perhaps, likely never to smile again. “O!” thought he, “this philosophic pride will not avail; this rebellion against the chastisements of the Almighty will not succeed. How inexpressibly would I rather see this unhappy father broken down beneath the hand of his God! how much more gladly would I behold him trembling, confounded, and laid in the dust! How dreadful is this to witness, and how terrible to see my father’s brother thus sullenly, proudly, and stubbornly, refusing to acknowledge his misery! But here I behold another horrible effect of infidelity, I am furnished with a still more striking example of that hardness of heart, and stubbornness of will, which accompanies unbelief.”

Clermont continued in the saloon with his aunt and uncle till the company withdrew. It was eleven o’clock when they took their leave; and the comte at the same time retired to his own chamber, leaving Madame with Clermont, to whom she thus addressed herself. “Well, my friend, and are you not astonished? Did I not tell you so? Did you ever witness equanimity like this?”

“If you are speaking, Madame, of my uncle’s appearance,” replied Clermont, “I never did, neither do I desire ever to see any thing of the kind again.” Clermont then opened his mind to his aunt, on the subject of his uncle’s state of feelings; but he soon found that she was totally incapable of comprehending him. He therefore abruptly broke off his discourse, and returned with increased uneasiness to his chamber.

For some days after this appearance of Clermont in the saloon, he saw his uncle at intervals, but had, nevertheless, no opportunity of entering into particular conversation with him, the comte always appearing with that cold, formal, and gloomy air which I have already described.

Preparations were now avowedly being made for the departure of the family from Paris; and Clermont began anxiously to look for news from the person who had undertaken to secure his safe return to England. The comte at length announced to his nephew, that this intelligence was come, and he added, that it would be

needful for him to depart immediately towards the sea-coast. At the same time, he presented him with a ring, and some other little valuables, which had been his sister's; and he further expressed a wish that they might meet again at some future time.

Clermont was now, by the death of the unhappy Victor, become the heir of his uncle's estates and titles: but to this circumstance the comte made no allusion, neither was it hinted at by Clermont, who was anxious to avail himself of this, perhaps, his last particular conversation with his relative, to enter with him on the most important subject which can engage the human mind. As the extremely cold and cautious manner of the comte was not in the least degree likely to present the smallest opening for a conversation of this kind, Clermont was himself obliged directly to introduce it; abrupt as it might appear for him to enter into a regular argument in favour of religion, of the comfort which it is capable of administering to persons in distress, and of the danger of neglecting the means of salvation so freely offered through Christ the Saviour.

The comte allowed his nephew to proceed for some time without interruption. Then calmly rising, he said, "These are mere matters of opinion, Clermont. The mind of man is constituted in such endless varieties, that he who attempts to make all men think alike on any given point, may be compared to the tyrant Procrustes, who would insist that the persons of every individual among his subjects should be fitted to one measure; and for this purpose he prepared an iron bedstead, in order to correspond with the length of which, a tall man must needs be cut, and a short one extended. You, my good young man, have been brought up as an heretic: I am a philosopher: and the best chance that we have of being agreeable to each other, is perhaps for us never to agitate the subjects on which we disagree." So saying, he left the room.

Clermont was now, at length, convinced, that little if any hope remained of his becoming an instrument of good in his uncle's family. He accordingly anxiously turned his thoughts towards Berkshire, looking forward with pleasure to his departure.

At length the day arrived, when with a bleeding heart

he took leave of the comte and comtesse, and, being accompanied only by his servant, quitted Paris by the Barrier de l'Etoile. There stopping for a moment within the gateway, and looking back from the eminence on which this gate is situated, through the long avenue which is terminated by the ancient palace of the Tuilleries, he was occupied for a short space with many confused and bitter thoughts, till, at length, being wholly overcome by them, he hastily turned away; and, as he brushed the tears from his eyes, exclaimed, "Oh, Victor! Victor! Oh, my Virginie! Oh, my sister!"

We will pass over the few difficulties which Clermont encountered in his voyage home, (difficulties which were principally occasioned by the state of variance in which the two countries were at that time,) and we will introduce our traveller again to the reader's notice at the moment when, having alighted from a post-chaise at Mr. Charlton's garden-gate, he proceeded up the narrow gravel walk, just about the hour of twilight, on a December evening, and saw through the window his beloved old friend siting in his study beside a bright fire, and meditating probably on some passage of Scripture which he had been reading, as an open Bible was lying on his table.

This simple and interesting picture of Christian peace, which Clermont instantly contrasted with that dreadful scene that he had witnessed within the walls of La Morgue, a scene which was ever present to his mind, was so touching to the dutiful and affectionate youth, that he speedily ran forward towards the hall, and was, a moment afterwards, in the arms of his paternal friend. "My son! my son!" exclaimed the old gentleman, as he pressed his Clermont in his arms, "now, now, may I adopt the words of Jacob—*Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive.*" (Gen. xlvi. 30.)

From that period, Clermont again became a constant inmate of Mr. Charlton's house; and though he was ordained soon after his return to England, as he was so happy as to procure a curacy in the immediate neighbourhood of his friend's house, his duties as a minister produced no necessity for their separation.

The dreadful scenes which Clermont had beheld in France afforded subjects of frequent conversation between himself and Mr. Charlton: and, on these occasions,

the old gentleman failed not to point out that all these horrors were the consequence of infidelity, the hardening and dreadful effects of which are such as to produce a hell in the mind of every miserable individual who is under its influence. "What then, my Clermont," he would add, "what should be our feelings of gratitude for that distinguishing favour which has made us to differ from the mass of infidels with which this world abounds! For all men are naturally infidels: all live in infidelity, till the Lord the Spirit convinces them of their unbelief. And though every unbelieving individual does not run to the extremes of profligacy and blasphemy which you witnessed in your own unhappy country, yet all are naturally enemies of God and haters of the light of divine truth, infidels in practice, and profligates in thought and feeling."

The last account that we heard of these persons, whose history we have given at some length, stated, that the comte had returned to Paris, and was become, apparently, a royalist, though really he was dissatisfied at the overthrow of the emperor and the restoration of the royal family; and Clermont, with the full approbation of Mr. Charlton, was preparing to go over to France, in order, if the Lord should permit him, to fulfil the resolutions which he had made while leaning on the parapet of the Pont Neuf, on that miserable morning which fixed for ever the fate of the guilty and miserable Virginie.

There was a general sadness diffused over the countenances of the little party, when the lady of the manor ceased to read; but, as the evening was very far advanced, few comments were made upon the story, and the meeting was, as usual, concluded by prayer.

A Prayer for an abiding Sense of the Presence of God, and for that holy Fear which is the Beginning of Wisdom.

"O THOU infinitely great, incomprehensible, and glorious Lord God Almighty, we humbly beseech thee to inspire our minds with the continual sense of thy presence. The fear of thee is indeed the beginning of wisdom; and we pray thee to restrain us by this holy fear, until

we arrive at that blessed state in which it shall be crowned by perfect love.

“ In our parental connexions on earth we find the emblem of that spiritual relation to thee, O our God, wherein alone consists our safety and our peace. Thou only, O Lord, art acquainted with that which is for our good : the clouds of ignorance obscure our minds ; we are altogether unable to distinguish between that which is good and that which is evil ; our feet are ever prone to stray in the paths of darkness, where snares and dangers encompass us on every side. But if we keep thee as our guide, we have no occasion for fear ; we are assured, that, in following the guidance of thy providence, we shall finally reach the abodes of peace, and that, if we forsake our own dark ways and uncertain paths, we shall, sooner or later, be delivered from every difficulty.

“ Our vile natures and depraved affections render it impossible for us to think of thee as we ought to think, or to love thee as thou oughtest to be loved, or to comprehend and appreciate thy glorious nature and attributes : nevertheless we have light sufficient to enable us to discern our own natural blindness and weakness ; and we, therefore, pray thee, for the sake of Him who died for us, to charge thyself with all our concerns. Leave us not to ourselves, O our God. Constrain us to go on in the way of holiness. Uphold us by thine own right arm. Hedge our paths, though it be with thorns, to the right and to the left ; and preserve us from the dreadfully presumptuous offences of those who despise thy providence, who reject thy government, and who fearlessly pursue the dictates of their own unbelieving and evil inclinations ; who walk in the paths of sin, and finally receive the punishment due to their offences.

“ Wherever thy inspiring presence is, O God, there thy saints enjoy their heaven. The martyr has rejoiced in thee even at the stake ; and holy gladness has filled the hearts of thy children when their frail bodies have been writhing under the tortures of temporal death. But who can conceive the horrors which thy absence inflicts on those who wilfully reject thy offers of mercy ? who can describe the darkness and misery of the stubborn unbeliever ? In what does hell itself consist but in the eternal absence of God ? and what is heaven itself

more than the uninterrupted sense of his presence, parental favour, and tender love?

“Thou, O our God, art indeed every where present—*If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.* To fly from thy presence is indeed impossible: but as the sun, which shines on all the visible creation, exhales only infectious fogs and pestilential vapours from the putrid marsh; so, in the heart of the unregenerate man, the idea of God’s authority would excite only horror, confusion, and misery. The evil soil rejects its kindly influences: it converts the breath of morn into blight and blasting, and the rays of light into lurid vapour; and it thus perverts that which constitutes the happiness of the blessed, into the means of more terrible endless misery, despair, and eternal death. O Almighty Father, leave us not therefore, we humbly supplicate thee, to our own erroneous devices; leave us not to ourselves, either to choose our own lot, or to fabricate our own schemes of happiness. Control our wills; subdue our passions; rein us in as with bit and bridle; leave us not, even for a moment, to our own misjudging minds; save us from the enemy who is able fully to destroy us, even from ourselves; and make us the blessed subjects of that great work of salvation which was ordained by thee ere yet the world began, with such effect, that, having been chosen by God the Father, justified through God the Son, and regenerated by God the Holy Ghost, we may be made partakers of everlasting glory in the world to come.

“And now to thee, O thou all-glorious and invisible Lord God Almighty, be ascribed all glory and honour, for ever and ever. Amen.”

CHAPTER XXIV.

Q. What is thy Duty towards thy Neighbour?

A. My Duty towards my Neighbour, is to love him as myself, and to do to all Men as I would they should do unto me. To love, honour, and succour my Father and Mother. To honour and obey the King, and all that are put in Authority under him. To submit myself to all my Governors, Teachers, spiritual Pastors and Masters. To order myself lowly and reverently to all my Betters. To hurt Nobody by Word or Deed. To be true and just in all my Dealings. To bear no Malice nor Hatred in my Heart. To keep my Hands from Picking and Stealing, and my Tongue from Evil-Speaking, Lying, and Slander. To keep my Body in Temperance, Soborness, and Chastity. Not to covet nor desire other Men's Goods; but to learn and Labour truly to get mine own Living, and to do my Duty in that State of Life unto which it shall please God to call me.

IT was now the beginning of autumn, and the days were, therefore, visibly shortening. The sun was setting behind the forest trees which adorned the verge of the western horizon when the youthful party assembled again in the beloved apartment at the manor-house. The lady of the manor looked round upon her pupils with approving satisfaction on this occasion; and having accosted them in her usually affectionate manner, she proceeded to point out what was to be the subject of their discourse on that evening. "This subject is furnished, my dear young people," she said, "by that part of the Catechism which treats of our duty to our neighbour; and we will, if you please, commence our employment by repeating that clause of the Catechism which describes this duty."

“ ‘ My duty towards my neighbour, is to love him as myself, and to do to all men as I would they should do unto me. To love, honour, and succour my father and mother. To honour and obey the king, and all that are put in authority under him. To submit myself to all my governors, teachers, spiritual pastors and masters. To order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters. To hurt nobody by word or deed. To be true and just in all my dealings. To bear no malice nor hatred in my heart. To keep my hands from picking and stealing, and my tongue from evil-speaking, lying, and slandering. To keep my body in temperance, soberness, and chastity. Not to covet nor desire other men’s goods; but to learn and labour truly to get mine own living, and to do my duty in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call me.’

“ It is not my intention,” continued the lady, “ to illustrate to you, clause by clause, that which I have just repeated; for in so doing I should necessarily go over the same ground which we have already travelled, in our considerations of the Commandments; but I shall take occasion to exhibit to you my views concerning both what ought to be the state of our feelings towards our fellow-creatures, and also what should be the result of these feelings, under three different heads, as follows: viz. what are our duties to our equals, our duties to our inferiors, and our duties to our superiors. And, inasmuch as I consider that, for the accomplishment of my object in promoting your benefit, example is better than precept, being at once more likely to be understood, to be remembered, and to be felt, I hope to read to you a short story on each of these subjects; in which several narratives I shall endeavour to point out what that especial feeling is, which operates in man’s heart as the chief hindrance of a just and proper conduct towards our neighbour.

“ This feeling is no other than that inordinate love of self that is common to every unregenerate man, and by which all his affections are excited and directed towards one object, whereby all his professed duties towards God are converted into eye-service, and his heart is rendered cold, callous, and dead with respect to the welfare of his fellow-creatures.

"Self, my dear young people," continued the lady, "is, as I have repeatedly told you, the idol of man; and it is the peculiar and special province of the work of grace to dethrone this idol, and to restore the Almighty to his place in the heart. It is easy enough to perceive the power of self in common characters, especially in cases where good manners afford no cloak for concealing its deformities; but it is lamentable to observe its influence among professors of religion, and to be constrained to confess its power in ourselves, even after the work of grace in our hearts is, we trust, begun. But, as I hope that you will find all that it is necessary to say on this subject in the narratives which I have provided, I shall proceed to read my first without delay."

The lady of the manor then, opening a small manuscript book, read as follows.

Eye Service.

"I shall make no apology for what I am about to do; because it is not to please, but I trust to profit, that I am induced to enter into the particulars of my history, and to relate those circumstances by which I have been brought, at the close of my days, to lift up my eyes to heaven, to bless the Most High, to praise and honour Him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom from generation to generation; in comparison of whom all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; for he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? (Dan. iv. 34, 35.)

"On looking back upon my past life, it appears to me that the Holy Spirit of God has been dealing with me for many years; and my reason for concluding this is, not from any advancement which I have made in piety, but because that for several years past I have had frequent and sometimes clear and unquestionable views of my sins. I therefore venture to infer that my total blindness had ceased long before any thing like the gracious fruits of repentance began in the least degree to appear. This view of the case is, however, far from being flattering to my feelings; for it is evident from thence that my growth

in grace, even if I have grown at all, has been remarkably slow; and that few persons, after having such strong convictions as I have had, ever allowed themselves to continue so long in the subsequent practice of sin. But to quit these reflections, and to leave my history to speak for itself.

"It is necessary for me, in order that I may make my story clear, to give my reader some little history of my family for two generations back. My grandfather was a wealthy merchant; and, on his retiring from business, he purchased a handsome mansion-house, situated in a beautiful village in Berkshire. There he died, leaving my grandmother, with two daughters, coheiresses, the younger of whom was my mother. Both these daughters married: the elder to a counsellor in London; and the younger to a gentleman in the West Indies. And both of them also died early: the elder about four years after her marriage; and the younger when I, her only child, was about fourteen years of age.

"My poor mother had brought me up with care, and had procured for me every advantage which the country would allow. I continued with my father for more than three years after my mother's death: but upon his purposing to marry again, I was sent to England, to my grandmother, who had long desired to see me, and who was a person in every respect qualified for the charge of me.

"I was seventeen when I arrived in England; on which, I proceeded immediately to my grandmother's dwelling, which, as has been already stated, was situated in a beautiful village in Berkshire.

"Those persons who have seen England only, can form but imperfect ideas of the scenery of other countries; and, on the contrary, those who have never beheld our happy island, can have but incorrect conceptions of the perfect neatness and elegance of some of those little villages in England, near which a few genteel and opulent families reside, who, by their active benevolence, and refined taste, seem entirely to chase sordid poverty and coarseness even from the dwellings of the poor. There is, indeed, no country perhaps in the world which exhibits scenery at once more beautiful and striking than the West India Islands, where the luxuriant foliage of the

tropical climate is employed for the decoration of steep hills, deep valleys, and precipices of the most abrupt and sublime appearance; where the ocean often presents a noble feature in each view; and where blue mountains in the remote distance constitute such a back-ground as the most daring imagination would hardly presume to supply.

"Accustomed, however, as I had been, from my very infancy, to behold these wonders of creation, and not only to behold, but to admire them; I, nevertheless, could not help being struck with the smiling beauty of the scenery of Berkshire, and the elegant neatness of the shrubbery and the exterior of my grandmother's house, when, after having been driven along for a considerable way through a rural street, we approached the gates of her garden. I still recollect, with a kind of pathetic pleasure, the scene which presented itself, while we were waiting for a moment at the gate of the garden as I was in the post-chaise in which I had arrived thither from town. It was the beginning of summer: the time was evening; and innumerable shrubs and flowers in full bloom perfumed the air with a delicious fragrance. All the windows of the large old-fashioned mansion were open, and through a wide bow-window, just opposite to the gate, I could distinguish my grandmother sitting, dressed as a widow, but a little drawn back; and before her, nearer to the window, were two young people, the one a female rather younger than myself, sitting down, and the other a youth, somewhat older, standing before her. These two last mentioned seemed speaking to each other as we drove up; and the sweet animation and artless expression of their blooming countenances are still imprinted in the liveliest colours on my memory.

"At the sight of the carriage they all started up, and in a moment afterwards I found myself kneeling at the feet of my grandmother, and clasped in the arms of my cousin Lucy.

"I should have told you before, that my aunt, when dying, left two daughters; the elder of whom, whose name was Selina, had been educated under her father's eye, by a governess in Town, and the younger, who was a mere infant at her mother's death, by my excellent grandmother. This was the little girl to whom I was

introduced on my first arrival in Berkshire. Her name, as I before said, was Lucy, and such had been the divine blessing upon the pious care of my grandmother, that this young creature exhibited the finest specimen that I ever saw of all that was lovely, admirable, and desirable in youth. She was about fourteen when we first met; and there was such a sunshine of cheerfulness diffused on her countenance, such a charming composure on her polished brow, such a brilliancy and clearness of health spread over her whole face and neck, such freshness and innocence in her mien altogether, that it seemed almost impossible, in looking upon her, to criticise a single feature, or to enquire into the means by which she so suddenly secured the admiration of all who saw her.

"It was impossible for me to behold this charming young creature without feeling that I had never seen any thing like her before: but my emotions of admiration and of love, for I could not help being strongly inclined towards her, were not without other feelings too often mingled with admiration; and I had scarcely risen up from my kneeling posture at my grandmother's feet, and taken my seat by her side on a sofa, before I fell into some very uneasy reflections, of the nature of which I shall take occasion to speak at a future time.

"My grandmother embraced the earliest opportunity, after she had ordered some refreshment for me, and also made some enquiries respecting my journey, to introduce to my notice the young gentleman before mentioned. He had withdrawn himself to the further end of the room during the first moments of my arrival; but on my grandmother calling him, and addressing him by the name of Henry, he came forward, blushing as he drew near, and exhibiting a countenance that had much of the same unaffected, open, and cheerful expression which I had already so greatly admired in Lucy.

"'Henry Selwyn,' said my grandmother, naming him to me as he came up to us: 'an adopted child of mine; son of a dear friend. You must love him, Caroline, as Lucy does; you must count him a brother; you have never had a brother, my love; Henry is to be as a brother to you.'

"While my grandmother spoke, I observed Lucy's eyes sparkle; and she looked at me as if in confirmation of

all that my grandmother said, and as much as to say, 'Yes, Caroline, you must love him; it is quite necessary that you should.'

"This ceremony being over, and the tea-equipage now appearing, we all gathered round the table in the bow-window; and I should have felt completely happy, could I have divested myself of those detestable selfish feelings which have tormented me all my life. O, sin! sin! how impossible would it be to be happy in heaven itself, otherwise than in a state of freedom from sin!

"It is scarcely possible to conceive any situation on earth more replete with circumstances of joy and comfort than mine was at the period of which I speak. I had just terminated a long, fatiguing, and dangerous voyage. I had indeed lost a parent some time ago; but I had just found another, in whom I saw again all that I had loved, honoured, and cherished in my departed mother. I had, moreover, just reached a home where every comfort and every elegance were indeed assembled, and I had just found such a companion as was calculated to make my life most delightful: but in the very attractions of this companion I discovered that which embittered all my happiness.

"I possessed indeed sufficient self-command to conceal from every common observer, all those feelings of envy and selfishness, which I even now at this remote period am almost ashamed to reveal to the world, although I expect that no one will read these memorials till after my death. Nevertheless, it would be very difficult to describe the workings of my mind while I sat at the tea-table on this the first evening of my arrival at my grandmother's.

"I remember that, though occupied in talking upon other subjects, I was all the time busily engaged in comparing myself with Lucy, and in balancing certain advantages which I fancied that I enjoyed, against those beauties which I too plainly perceived to be in her possession. I busied myself also in thinking how far Henry Selwyn liked her, what might be the nature of his feelings towards her, and whether it might not be possible for me to make him like me as well, or better.

"My mother had not neglected to inculcate religious principles upon my mind; I therefore was not without

some idea, all this time, that the feelings which I was indulging were wrong. But this idea was a confused one: and certain it is, that I then by no means saw the atrocious and hateful tendency of those selfish principles which I encouraged; otherwise, I surely should have striven to employ such means as might have set me free from them. For although, sometimes, in cases even of very advanced Christians, lest they should be exalted above measure, through the abundance of the revelations, there may be given to them a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet them; yet, if they beseech the Lord, that it may depart from them, he will make his grace sufficient for them, that his strength may be made perfect in their weakness. (2 Cor. xii. 7—9.) But I do not remember that at that time I ever made any strong effort, or that I indeed used any means, to overcome these feelings: but, on the contrary, I allowed my mind to be continually occupied by myself and my own concerns, either in one way or other, till I brought upon myself my own punishment. But enough of this for the present.

"I went to bed early, and slept till late the next morning. The family had breakfasted when I awoke; and, on opening my eyes, I was surprised to see Lucy sitting at the foot of my bed, sewing as busily as if she had to earn her bread by her needle. She was so intent upon her work, that, when I first opened my eyes, she did not perceive it. At the sight of her, those uneasy feelings which had subsided during the night again revived, and I again shut my eyes; but still I beheld her in fancy, dressed as she was, in a simple white frock, without any ornament but her shining hair knotted on the back of her head. After a few moments I opened my eyes again, and endeavouring to seem pleased to see her, 'O, Lucy!' I said, 'are you there? and what are you so busy about? You seem working for your very existence.'

"'O yes, my dear Caroline,' she answered, 'I am indeed in a great hurry; I have not a minute to lose. I am making a shirt for a poor old man. Henry Selwyn brought it to me yesterday, and enquired if it could be possibly finished this evening; because we are then going, about some other business, to the place where the old man lives. It is a lovely walk through the beech woods, only two miles.'

"‘And so,’ I said, ‘Henry is to accompany you in this walk?’

“‘Yes, to be sure,’ she said, looking at me with some surprise, ‘he always goes with us when he is at home.’

“‘Who do you mean by us?’ I asked.

“‘Grandmamma and me,’ replied Lucy. ‘Grandmamma goes in her little pony chair, and I and Henry walk by her: and it is so pleasant!’

“‘I dare say it is,’ I answered, ‘very, very pleasant.’

“Lucy echoed the word pleasant with the utmost glee, and went on with her work. ‘How quickly your fingers move, Lucy!’ I said.

“‘O yes,’ she answered, ‘they must move quickly, or they will not have done their task. But I will fetch your breakfast,’ added this sweet little girl, and throwing down her work on the bed, she was out of the room in a moment.

“When Lucy returned with my breakfast on a tray, I said, ‘My dear, why do you do this yourself? Why did not you ring for a servant?’

“‘O, because,’ she answered, playfully, and as if it were a matter of no moment, ‘because I liked to wait upon you myself. But I must not lose time; I must go to my work again; and I shall be ready to run for any thing that you may want.’

“‘She looks pretty, very pretty,’ I thought to myself, as I was eating my breakfast; ‘and though she is so simple, I never saw her do an awkward thing. But I dare say that she does not know much. I have no doubt that she has been brought up in a plain way. I dare say that she has no accomplishments.’ This conjecture was pleasing to me; especially as I had not many myself: the climate and the state of the country in which I had been educated not being favourable for these matters. I thought, however, that I would ask her what she knew; and I hoped to have such answers as would please me. ‘Lucy,’ I said, ‘have you learned music?’

“Without raising her head from her work, she answered in the affirmative, adding something respecting her work, quite foreign to my question.

“I took no notice of the latter part of her speech; but enquired if she had learned long, and whether she was far advanced.

"All that I could discover from her answer was, that, whatever attainment she had made in music, it was evident that she did not at all know how to appreciate her own merits. I questioned her then relative to some other branches of instruction: her answers concerning which still left me in perplexity; and the next idea that occurred to me was, that she wanted sense. This thought was replete with satisfaction to my envious mind: and, while full of it, I rang for a servant, was assisted to get up, and was led by Lucy to the room in which my grandmother spent her mornings. Here, in this room, which was in a retired part of the house, and which opened towards a shadowy part of the garden, I saw a musical instrument, and several music-books, several drawings of my cousin's, and a variety of other things, which proved to me that, whatever talents my cousin might have, much pains had been taken with her education. Here also were many books, and several chests and cabinets, some of which, as I afterwards found, contained garments for the poor; and over the mantle-piece there was a picture of my aunt and mother when they were little children.

"I sat here during some time, giving my grandmother various accounts of things that I had learned abroad, till, suddenly, Lucy proclaimed with triumph the completion of her task, and ran out of the room to perform some little jobs which she had postponed for this great work.

"'You see, my dear,' said my grandmother, as soon as my little cousin was gone out, 'how industrious Lucy is. There is one thing, my Caroline, particularly admirable in her; indeed I might say that there are many things. But that for which I chiefly admire her, is that she appears to be less occupied by self than any young person that I ever met with. It is remarked by those who know human nature best, that there is no part of life during which persons are more selfish, than they are from that period of childhood when they have ceased to hang upon the parent with infant helplessness, until the time when they themselves begin to feel the strength of conjugal and parental affection. Old people are often supposed to be particularly selfish: but there is scarce an old person living who does not take thought for the welfare of some son or daughter, some grandchild or

nephew, some dog or cat. But young people, at the age of which we speak, often care for nothing under the sun but themselves. And hence the uneasiness and fretfulness that we see in so many children under a tender parent's roof. But your dear cousin Lucy is a remarkable instance of the reverse of all this. I never saw another young creature like herself, so invariably and continually occupied in doing good to others, without any self-preference: and that without parade and ostentation; for I have never allowed her to be praised for well-doing, and I indeed have, to the utmost in my power, preserved her from all flattery.'

"I was not altogether in a mood to relish these praises bestowed on my little cousin, and, as you may suppose, I endeavoured to console myself with the notion, that my grandmother might perhaps be somewhat partial to the child whom she herself had brought up.

"While I was meditating on this matter, and thus giving myself a vast deal of trouble to reconcile my mind to the excellencies of Lucy, (which, after all, I could not help acknowledging,) I did not consider that the world is wide enough for all the creatures that the Almighty has placed in it, and that no two persons' interests would ever interfere, if each would strictly pursue the path peculiarly appointed by Providence. And, as I was thus employed, my grandmother was called down to receive some titled ladies, who were come in a coach-and-four.

"These ladies had been ushered into the drawing-room, a large apartment, which my grandfather himself had furnished with great magnificence, and at the further end of which there was a fine finger-organ.

"My grandmother insisted upon taking me in her hand to receive these ladies, and I must confess, that although I had always been used to good company, I was, nevertheless, somewhat abashed to find myself in the presence of real nobility. As I was not, however, called upon to speak, and as my grandmother possessed all the dignity and composure requisite for the occasion, I might have contrived to sit out the time of the visit with equanimity, had I been so disposed: but I was no sooner seated by my grandmother in the august circle, than my restless mind began its usual exercise, which, in the present instance, was that of comparing myself with the

ladies before me; and, as a lively state of selfish sensibility is as liable to depression as to exaltation, I fancied that I lost greatly by the comparison. I became, in consequence, agitated, confused, and ashamed: and a question being suddenly proposed to me concerning the West Indies, I addressed the lady who sat next me by the title of Sir, I called the east west, and the north south; and, after making several other blunders, was obliged to leave my grandmother to finish my speech.

"It now became a point of politeness to spare my confusion by not noticing me any further, and this politeness was well understood; for a new subject was instantly started, by one of the ladies speaking of a very beautiful hymn which she had just procured from a friend, and expressing a wish that she could hear it upon the fine organ then in the room.

"All eyes were immediately fixed upon me; but, on my grandmother saying that I had not been used to an organ, and the same plea being, also, urged by some of the ladies present, my grandmother rang the bell, and sent for Lucy.

"In a few minutes, the sweet child came in, dressed exactly as I had seen her early in the morning. She entered courtesying; and on being informed of what was required of her, she went calmly up to the instrument, and played the hymn, which was placed before her, accompanying it with her voice in a manner equally sweet and simple: after which, being dismissed by my grandmother, she walked quietly along the room, courtesied at the door, and disappeared.

"As soon as she was gone, the superior of the ladies, as she appeared to be, laid her hand on my grandmother's arm, saying, 'Indeed, Mrs. Thornton, you are too hard upon us, not to allow us to say one word to your little granddaughter for the charming treat that she has given us, not only to-day, but also many times before.'

"Every one then present spoke in praise of Lucy, commanding her voice, her simple and interesting manner, her charming countenance, and her readiness to oblige.

"My grandmother bowed, and seemed pleased, but said nothing: on which, the superior of the visitors re-

marked, that it was the unaffected simplicity of this little girl's character which rendered all her other excellencies so striking. 'In the first circles,' added she, 'it is considered the utmost perfection of high breeding to seem artless, easy, and elegant; it is a perfection which few can attain, and which, when acquired, is irresistibly attractive. But your Lucy has it without effort; and there is a calmness and a modest dignity in her manner, together with a sweetness, which the utmost polish of art could never give her. It must, I am convinced, Mrs. Thornton, be the effect of a fine and well-ordered mind.'

"'It is the effect of piety, Lady —,' said my grandmother. 'Lucy is a humble and pious child; she thinks humbly of herself, and highly of those about her; she is careless of her own comforts, but eager to promote those of others: and thus, without seeking happiness, she finds it, for she is the happiest of human beings. She has never been fed with praise, and therefore does not need it; and she is taught, when she has been enabled to do well, to give all the glory to God.'

"'Well,' replied the lady, 'I do not much understand your system of education, Mrs. Thornton; but I admire the result of your labours above all things:' and the visitors, on her so saying, arose, and departed. After which, I followed my grandmother into the dining-room, where we found Henry and Lucy both engaged in packing a basket, in which certain articles were placed preparatory to our evening excursion.

"I was surprised on finding that Lucy made not the most distant reference to the hymn, the ladies, or the organ. I expected every moment to have heard her say, 'O dear, grandmamma, I was so frightened when you called me in before those ladies! I did tremble so! and I never saw the hymn before! How did I behave? was I terribly out of tune?' &c. &c. But no, not a word escaped on the subject, and Lucy seemed to be wholly absorbed in the charming prospect of the evening's amusement.

"While the servants were laying the cloth, my grandmother sat down, had the basket brought to her feet, and employed Henry Selwyn and Lucy to fetch and carry what was further requisite to be put into it. There was tea, sugar, bread, butter, and cream; a roll of linen for

one poor creature, a little frock or cap for another, a book for another, a little wine for another; with a thousand etceteras which I could not remember; and such running backwards and forwards, such shoving and packing by Henry, such arranging and contriving on the part of my grandmother, and such animated interest in the countenance of Lucy, that I thought I never before in my life saw three such happy beings.

"At table, nothing was talked of but our intended expedition; and about an hour after dinner, the pony-carriage being brought up to the door, my grandmother got into it, and we set out with our basket.

"I had been with marooning parties in the West Indies, where persons go out, and, taking provisions with them, spend a day in the woods; but these expeditions gave me but little idea of the charming liberty and interest of an excursion of this kind in England. Our way lay through an extensive beech wood. We sometimes diverged a little from the carriage-road, and stepped aside into some of the narrow wood walks; but we seldom went out of sight or hearing of the pony-carriage. Sometimes, in our progress, we came near to certain lovely cottages, the inhabitants of which my grandmother knew by name. By these she was accosted with extreme delight; and I found that there was not a house by which we were to pass for which she had not some token of remembrance.

"On the occasion of this my first walk in England, I heard the cuckoo for the first time. The notes of this bird struck me very forcibly as being something entirely different from every thing that I had ever heard before, and conveyed to my mind such an idea of tranquillity, solitude, and a rural life, as I can hardly describe.

"I was rather fatigued by the time that we arrived at the end of the wood and entered upon one of those little neat greens or commons, surrounded by houses, now, indeed, so seldom seen, but formerly so general. Here, passing through a gate in a quickset hedge, we arrived at the porch of an old half-timbered cottage, where an aged man and woman received us, and where tea was presently provided for us from the contents of the basket. But while the water was boiling, Henry Selwyn proceeded about a quarter of a mile further, to deliver the shirt

which Lucy had made to the person for whom it was intended, and Lucy set off another way to visit a little school in the green, which she patronized. In the mean time, being little accustomed to walking, I sat with my grandmother till their return.

"While alone with my grandmother, I recollect that she fell into some serious discourse; yet, though serious, its tendency was cheerful. 'Well, my dear,' she said, 'what a happiness is this, to have the daughters of my children with me! I could fancy almost that I had my own beloved ones again: but I shall have them again,' she added, with spirit; 'they are not lost to me. When the Lord would make up to Job all that he had suffered, he gave him possessions of *twice as much as he had before*, but he added unto him only the same number of children which he previously had; thus intimating, that although the rest of his substance had utterly perished, his children still remained, and would again be restored to him. A sweet reflection this, my child, to a bereaved parent.'

"My grandmother remained silent for a few minutes after making this remark, and then said, 'O, my Caroline, this world is confessedly a world of trials; nevertheless, it is also provided with consolations for those who will cease to make self their idol, and who can patiently and meekly rest upon the help and promise of their Saviour. How have I laboured with my dear Lucy, in order to draw her off from the love of self, to excite her feelings for others, and to render her open and sincere in all her dealings! My daughter, always consider self as one of the worst of your enemies, and learn to rejoice with those that rejoice, and to weep with those that weep; but seek not exclusively your own happiness in this world, desire no earthly distinctions, but habitually receive and enjoy, with gratitude and humility, the blessings which are bestowed upon you in your passage through life. To-morrow this worn-out frame of mine may fall to pieces and sink into the grave, but to-day will I rejoice in the visible glories of my God on earth, and I will exult in the prospect of my salvation in heaven.'

"In this manner the pious old lady continued to converse, and she seemed almost to have wrought my mind into her own heavenly frame, when I perceived Henry

Selwyn and Lucy approach nearly at the same time, but in such contrary directions, that it appeared to me very plainly they could not have been together while absent. At the sight of each other, they seemed mutually to quicken their pace, and they met precisely at the garden-gate, on the top of which Henry placed his hand first, and held it fast while he spoke to Lucy. Their cheeks, particularly Henry's, were flushed with their recent exercise. He had taken off his hat in order to cool himself, and his brow being now bare and exposed, a remarkable degree of spirit and animation was imparted to his countenance as he stooped to speak to Lucy. ‘This brother and sister,’ I thought, ‘seem very fond of each other; I am sure he never will be so fond of me.’ At the same moment, the garden-gate was opened, and Lucy came forward, followed by Henry; and they both set themselves down to the tea-table, while Lucy began to detail at length the little anecdotes of the school that she had visited; in doing which, she found so much to say, and to interest her auditors, and at the same time she looked so good-humoured and pretty, that I grew quite impatient, and thus, becoming really disordered from finding myself thrown so entirely into the back-ground, I got up from my chair, retreated to another at some distance, and, bursting into tears, complained of excessive fatigue.

“This manoeuvre, had its desired effect. The old man, who had been blowing the fire to boil more water, threw down the bellows, and stood bolt upright. The old woman lifted up her hands, and exclaimed aloud. Henry Selwyn scalped his throat by swallowing his tea in too great haste. My grandmother was distressed, and looked at every one of us as if she was unable to conceive what all this could mean: and I for my part was perfectly satisfied. Every one was now occupied with me, instead of attending to Lucy; and that was, of course, highly gratifying to my selfishness. It now, however, became needful for me to carry on the farce which I had begun. I therefore sobbed, held my hand to my side, complained of fatigue, and should have thought it right to find it very difficult to get home, as the pony-carriage held but one person, and as my grandmother was unable to walk, had not the old man proposed to borrow a

neighbour's donkey, on which I was placed; and Henry, taking the bridle, I had the satisfaction to find that it was impossible for him to attend to any thing but me and my palfrey.

"And now, my gentle reader, you may picture to yourself our cavalcade as we returned, and fancy me talking to Henry about the West Indies and other matters, while he most gallantly led me forward through the wood, which was rather dark before we had cleared it. Lucy, in the mean time, following our steps, smilingly compared us to a company of gipsies.

"In this style we arrived at home; and my grandmother hastened me to bed, not at all suspecting how much of affectation and selfishness really existed under my supposed indisposition.

"Thus have I described with tolerable accuracy the employments of the first twenty-four hours that I spent at my grandmother's, and I have given my reader some little insight into my own character, and those of my friends.

"The next day was spent at home, in reading, working, and drawing. Henry Selwyn, I found, was fond of employing his pencil. He had learned at school, and he was teaching Lucy. My mother had given me also some instructions, but I had ceased to practise since her death. I, however, no sooner saw Lucy engaged in this employment, than I expressed a wish to join the party; a thing in itself for which no one could possibly blame me, for every effort which a young person makes to improve is laudable. But improvement was not my object: I felt that I never should draw, for I never had shewn any taste for it; but I could not bear to be left in the background with respect to any thing. Accordingly, I made a very humble and pretty petition to Henry Selwyn, in a sort of half playful, half petted way, begging him to teach me to draw, together with Lucy. And when seated at the table, with my paper before me, and my pencil in my hand, I made a thousand applications to him for little assistances: sometimes he was to lend me a penknife, then to cut me a pencil, then to shew me where to make the next stroke; then I called upon him either to encourage or blame, laughed at my own awkwardness, uttered little cries of astonishment, or sighed and pouted;

and, in short, played off all those tricks which self-conceited young people commonly employ to engross the attention of others.

"My grandmother was not in the room all this time, and Lucy seemed quite engaged with her work; but Henry Selwyn, who for his age appeared to be a remarkably manly and steady character, seemed for a while to be determined to treat me with that kind of cold and distant politeness which is best suited to keep in order such a character as mine then was: but, on my making some egregious mistake in my drawing, he uttered some boyish expression of displeasure, calling me stupid, or tiresome, or something to the purpose; on which, I arose from the table, retreated to a couch, leaned my head on my arm, and began to sob and cry.

"On seeing my tears, and fancying that he had been the cause of them, he seemed much perplexed. 'Dear Caroline,' he said, throwing down his pencil, and coming up to me, 'I hope I have not hurt your feelings: I beg a thousand pardons if I have. Pray, forgive me.'

"By this time, Lucy had desisted from her work, and was looking eagerly towards us. 'O,' I answered, 'I know that I am stupid; I know you never can teach me; I am not like Lucy; I have not had her advantages: but I will admire her at a distance, and I will trouble you no more with my incapacity.'

"'Carline! don't speak in this way,' he rejoined, seeing my tears; 'come back to the table; if you do not wish to make me very unhappy, you will try again.'

"Thus he continued to plead, and with such earnestness, that I arose, and was led back by him to my seat, where, in a kind of affectionate manner which he had not yet used towards me, he placed the pencil in my hand, and begged me to make another trial of my skill.

"While all this was passing, Lucy was observing us; neither was I unmindful of her. At first she seemed quite at a loss to imagine what all this bustle was about; but presently judging of things according to their appearances, and fancying that I really had serious apprehensions whether I should ever be able to learn, her countenance suddenly lost its air of perplexity, the sunshine returned, and, running to a drawer near at hand,

she produced her first attempt at pencilling, and spread it open by mine, declaring, with exultation, that mine was better than hers, calling upon Henry at the same time to make the comparison.

"I felt for a moment the sweetness of Lucy's conduct; and I could not refrain, as she stood by me, from turning towards her, and clasping my arms round her neck. She seemed startled at this motion, particularly as Henry Selwyn was by, and I thought that she desired to remind me of his presence by a certain gentle glance of her eye towards him—a glance, however, which was instantly recalled by her eyes being fixed on the drawing before her.

"No occurrence worth noticing took place during the remainder of this day, which we spent entirely at home, it being rainy; nor can I remember any thing very particular for some days afterwards; though I doubt not that, in the interim, I gave many evidences of my real character, which was that of habitual devotedness to self: as about this time my grandmother called me into her closet, and addressed me in the following discourse, the substance of which she afterwards took the trouble of committing to paper for my use. She began this conference, by remarking to me that there were certain traits of my character which did not meet with her approbation: 'And, short, my dear,' she added, 'as our acquaintance has been, I consider it as my duty to speak to you with plainness, though it be with the risk of offending you.'

"I leave the reader to imagine how I started and reddened on hearing myself thus addressed, and how I was puzzled to conceive of what offence I could possibly have been guilty, to draw upon myself so serious a lecture. I had undoubtedly heard much of the depravity of human nature, and I should not have scrupled to confess that I partook of this depravity in common with all others of the human race in general; nevertheless, I was utterly amazed when my grandmother presumed to bring any specific charges against me: and she had scarcely ceased to speak, before I burst into a violent agony of weeping, exclaiming, in a kind of paroxysm of passion, that I considered myself as the most unfortunate creature on earth, to have offended my dear grandmamma, and

that before I had been one month under her roof. I then gave vent to various other pathetic exclamations, much to this purpose,—that it was the last thought that I ever could have entertained when I left the West Indies, that I should come to England to grieve and distress my poor dear grandmother. I then apostrophized my own mother, and burst again into an agony of tears. I expected, that, on witnessing this my grief, my grandmother would have melted into tenderness, and pressed me in her arms, perhaps calling me the dear and only representative of her departed Caroline. But nothing of this kind occurred. The old lady sat perfectly still, and spoke not again till I had recovered my composure, and had fallen into a kind of sullen humour, which succeeded my agony of passion, when I discovered that all my cries and exclamations had utterly failed of the effect that they were intended to produce.

“ My grandmother then renewed her discourse, by setting before me a plain statement of what man’s situation on earth would have been, had he not fallen from his original righteousness, and then comparing it with his present lost, undone, and ruined condition: adding this truth; that every faculty of the soul, the body, and the intellectual powers were become radically and entirely corrupt. ‘ The time was,’ continued the venerable lady, ‘ ere yet man had fallen from his pristine glory, when all and each of his powers were as glorious and as free from sin, as they now are corrupt and depraved; his body then was beautiful, and his mind was formed after the moral image of his Maker; he was not liable to death, and his affections were upright and holy, not having received that perverse and fatal bent, which leads the unregenerate creature to call evil good and good evil, and to delight in the ways of wickedness rather than those of virtue. The only proper, just, and desirable object of man’s supreme affections, is God. He may indeed love his neighbour, but this affection should be in subordination to that which he is to cherish towards his God. It is written, *He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.* (Matt. x. 37.) We are taught that the blessedness of heaven will consist in the union of all its glorious inhabitants under

one head; all being bound by one interest, all united in one common cause, all being continually engaged in one song of praise, one strain of everlasting harmony without a single discord, one eternal cry of “Glory, glory, glory, to Him who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.” In those blissful regions, where salvation shall be for ever secured to its blessed inhabitants, no one will desire to appropriate honour to himself; the brightest archangel in the hierarchies of heaven would not dare, nay, would not wish to receive the praise of the meanest of the Lord’s creatures: though crowned with everlasting glory, and clad in the robes of heavenly splendour, though endowed with Godlike wisdom, embellished with eternal youth, though glowing with angelic bloom, and endued with immortal strength; yet we know that such a one would have no other thought but to bring all his honours to the feet of his Saviour, and to cast his crown before the throne of his heavenly Master. Nay, more than this, we are taught that Christ, in his character as man, takes no glory to himself, but gives all the glory to the Father.—*Jesus answered, I have not a devil: but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me.* (John viii. 49.) And yet presumptuous man, ruined, lost, fallen, and undone man, has no fears of this kind, no dread of placing himself, as it were, in the throne of God; and whenever he does not receive the praise of his fellow-creatures, he even presumes to demand, to extort it, and he feels himself mortified, dissatisfied, and injured, if he is not an object of general attention.’

“In this place my grandmother paused; and I remarked, that I still felt myself in the dark, and could not see how I was to apply to myself what she had just said to me.

“I thought that the old lady sighed on hearing this, but I was not quite sure. She, however, immediately replied, addressing me by my name in an affectionate manner, and pointing out to me, that when man fell, he utterly lost that love and respect for his Maker by which he had been originally actuated. ‘His affections then,’ said she, ‘received a false direction; self became the idol of the passions; and from that period,’ she added, ‘every unconverted man continues devoted to self, eager for his own gratifications, anxious to push himself for-

ward into such situations as he considers honourable or pleasurable, and ready to sacrifice all other interests to what he conceives to be his own.'

"I remember, that, when my grandmother came to this part of our conversation, I began to form some little notion of what she was about, and to dread some more home pushes than any that I had yet received. She, however, spared me these, although I no longer doubted that she had made discoveries relative to my selfish and envious disposition which I should not have liked to have heard mentioned, and she proceeded to speak of the change which took place in the heart of man at his regeneration. She entered somewhat largely on the plan formed by the glorious Three in One for man's salvation, and on the peculiar work and effectual operations of the Holy Spirit in changing the heart. She pointed out, that the first work of God the Spirit was to humble the new-born creature, to convince him of unbelief, to empty him of self, and to restore the Almighty to his throne in the heart. She proceeded then to enter into some details on this part of her subject; and pointed out to me, that the converted man, as he advances nearer and nearer to the perfection of holiness, and is more and more changed into the image of Christ, becomes less and less occupied by self, more and more debased in his own eyes, and more tender and jealous of the honour of God.

"My grandmother then proceeded to remark the deplorable deficiency of many professing Christians, in the present-day, with respect to that spirit of self-abasement which appeared in some of the holy men of old time. 'How few of these characters,' said she, 'of whom we should hope better things, prove fully able to disentangle themselves from those feelings of self-love by which we are all so easily beset! These feelings actuate, at all times, and amidst all circumstances, many of those whom we would wish to think the excellent of the earth. In the pulpit, in the closet, at the altar, do they betray themselves; being more or less visible to the eye of the observer, according as the individual who is the object of observation has more or less skill and presence of mind in concealing them. Selfishness,' added the venerable lady, 'may be frequently hidden from the eye of man by courteous manners; it may be glossed over by art and

good taste; it may perhaps lie very deeply concealed, and may not be liable to excitements of an ordinary kind; it may discern the promotion of its own interests by its concealment: but while it is a living, active, and cherished principle, there is little reason to suppose but that it will, some time or other, discover its influence, to the confusion of the individual who indulges it, and the dis-honour of the religion which he professes.'

"My grandmother then went on to say, that, upon a close inspection of my character, she had been apprehensive that the spirit of self-love natural to man reigned in my heart with unsubdued power, and that, consequently, there was reason to fear, that, although I might have attained an acquaintance with the history and doctrines of the Christian religion, I had still never experienced its power, inasmuch as where divine grace once commences an effectual work in the heart, the strong holds of self-love begin in some degree to be shaken.

"On hearing this, I renewed my weeping, and asked my venerable parent (with whom, by the bye, I was at that moment thoroughly incensed) to point out to me those particulars of my behaviour on which she had founded her judgment.

"She smiled, but it was with a smile of compassion, and she replied, 'My dear child, I have lived too long in the world, not to be able to read, with considerable accuracy, the lines of a youthful countenance. Humility and simplicity, my Caroline,' she added, 'possess certain characteristic marks which can never be mistaken where continued opportunity of observation is presented; while the contrary character also has its appropriate marks, which it would be equally difficult to mistake. Life is too short, my child, and death is at all times too near, to allow us to trifle with each other. I may give you temporary pain by my remarks, but I dare not withhold them; nevertheless, it is very difficult precisely to point out to you the various indications by which it has become evident to me that self is your idol, that you are seldom occupied by any other object, except as that object has reference to self, and that there are few if any occasions on which you forget self, and feel so far interested in the concerns of others, as to cease from anxieties on your own account.'

"I blushed exceedingly on hearing these words, and felt as if my grandmother were about to lay open every thought of my heart.

"The old lady observed my blushes, and made some apology for probing me so closely. 'My child,' she said, 'my connexion with you requires me to treat you with a freedom that I am not at liberty to use to others. But do not suppose that I consider my own heart to be any better than yours: for *as in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man.* (Prov. xxvii. 19.) It is grace alone, my child, that makes any difference which may subsist between one and another, the free grace of God, bestowed by him according to his sovereign pleasure, without respect to the merits of the individual. And O, my daughter!' she added, clasping her hands with unfeigned fervency, 'may you become the subject of this grace! may the strong holds of self-love be overthrown within your breast! may the idol self be torn from his throne in your heart! and may the Almighty become the object of your supreme affections! Then, then, my child, I shall no longer see in you those capricious and affected airs which so greatly diminish your external gracefulness; I shall no longer see your eyes turned on all sides, as it were, to collect the suffrages of those about you; I shall no longer observe those little stratagems to obtain attention; but all will be serene within and lovely without.'

"My grandmother then concluded her discourse by an animated description of that peculiar and angelic beauty habitually diffused throughout the human countenance by the triumph of grace over the natural selfishness of the heart; a beauty that is wholly independent of the natural features, or of the tincture of the skin, yet such, when it is associated with youthful comeliness, as almost conveys to the imagination a faint idea of angelic excellence.

"'You are thinking of Lucy,' I exclaimed, as my grandmother ceased to speak: 'the description just suits her. Had I enjoyed Lucy's advantages,' I added, 'I might perhaps have resembled her.' Thus speaking, I again burst into an agony of tears.

"'I love my Lucy,' said my grandmother, solemnly; 'she is a blessed child; she will be a blessed child. But,

Caroline, my love, the world is wide enough for you and for Lucy also, and heaven is wider still.'

"The manner in which these words were uttered, startled and even shocked me. 'What,' thought I, 'does my grandmother suspect?' She, however, added no more, but, rising and kissing me, withdrew to her closet.

"From the time of this conversation, which had taken place after dinner, I retired to my own room, where I spent an hour in bitter tears and sobs, considering myself (and delighting in the thought) the most unhappy creature in the world.

"There is in fallen man an intense desire of being somewhat extraordinary, something out of the common way. This feeling is often particularly ardent in unconverted young women, who, living at ease at home, are in want of some object with which to engage their energies. Hence are produced those countless numbers of would-be heroines, who desire to make it appear that they are constantly the objects of persecution on account of their beauty. It must, however, be remarked, that the heroines who are persecuted for their beauty are not the only, nor, indeed, in this age, the most usual species of heroines. Those who are persecuted for their religion, and those who experience severe spiritual trials, are at present the most abundant; and it is much to be feared that the profession of religion is now more frequently perverted to the promotion of vanity, than to the pulling down of the strong holds of Satan and the debasement of self; such is the depravity of man, and such is its effect of contaminating and poisoning all that it touches.—But to return to myself.

"While remaining alone in my room, I was engaged with many and various thoughts, and became convinced that I should utterly fail of being loved by my grandmother in the degree that Lucy was, unless I changed my mode of conduct, unless I appeared to be more serious, less devoted to myself, and more zealous for the service of the poor. Self-love was not backward in convincing me of the expediency of my seeming all this, and I therefore, without hesitation, determined to adopt and pursue this alteration in my practice; neither can I say, even to this hour, how far I was conscious of the duplicity of my in-

tentions: but I am rather inclined to think that I was not then in the least degree suspicious of myself, but that, if any one had questioned me concerning what was passing in my mind, I should have replied, that I had been repenting in consequence of the serious lecture given me by my grandmother. To leave, however, these various perplexities, and allow my reader to judge of me by facts, I proceed to remark, that, when I heard the usual signal given for tea, I went down into the library, where we commonly took that meal, and where I had first met my grandmother and Lucy. But, before I left my room, I remember that I looked in the glass, new modelled my hair, and perceived with pleasure that only such traces of my tears remained, as gave what I regarded as an interesting languor to my countenance; that unfortunate redness having disappeared from the tip of my nose which so sadly intrudes on the beauty of all weeping females who are not of truly heroic origin.

"On my entering the library, into which I walked with a languid step, I saw my grandmother seated with her usual composure on the sofa, busily engaged with her knitting, (for she supplied all the rheumatic poor in the village with warm stockings,) and Lucy and Henry Selwyn occupied about some concerns which I did not at first comprehend, but which were of such a nature that the whole centre of the room was littered by them; Henry kneeling on the floor, and exerting almost as much strength as would have enabled him to fell a tree, in packing up and closely tying in large sheets of brown paper certain articles delivered to him by the hand of Lucy, while she was continually making references to her grandmother, and giving directions to Henry, with a glee and animation which diffused over her cheeks a finer bloom than I had ever before seen in her. At the moment when I entered the door, she was offering to Henry a small parcel contained in cap-paper, and pointing out to him where it was to be placed; when he, turning aside a part of the paper, laughed, and said, 'O, Lucy, Lucy! I will betray you; I will tell grandmamma.'

"'No, no, Henry,' she rejoined, 'no, you shall not; pray put up the parcel, and say nothing.'

"So saying, she was trying, with a gentle violence, to take the parcel out of his hand, when he, rising from

the ground on which he had been kneeling, and pushing aside his fine hair from his forehead, held up the parcel to the old lady, and exposed the flaxen head and lack-lustre blue eyes of a wooden doll; saying, at the same time, ‘See, grandmamma; see how provident Lucy is for the happiness of little Annie.’

“The old lady smiled: and Henry turned towards his young companion with a look so full of tenderness mingled with admiration, as I had never before seen expressed in any countenance. Then, without adding another word, he returned to his employment, and Lucy resumed her wonted composure, together with that sweet expression of peace, which had been only slightly disturbed by the circumstance which I have described.

“The parcel was shortly afterwards completed, directed, and dispatched by the hand of some person who had been waiting for it; and we were presently all seated around the tea-table, where I hoped Henry Selwyn would find leisure to observe how pale and interesting I looked. I had no inclination to enquire into the circumstances concerning the parcel and the doll. As my reader, however, may not perhaps have the same motives as I had, for not desiring to dive into the particulars relating to the good works of Lucy, nor the same objection to enter into the description respecting them, I shall state, in as short an account as possible, that the parcel was for the use of a little child, the offspring of a poor beggar, who, in passing through the village, had died in a barn, and left an infant of a few months old, a lovely baby, that would probably have been consigned to perish in a work-house, had not Henry Selwyn, then a boy of fifteen, chanced to see it, and undertaken, with the help of Lucy, to pay a poor honest cottager to rear it. This little creature was four years old at the time that I speak of, and was then maintained by its youthful guardians, assisted by my grandmother, at a little simple and happy boarding-school not very far distant.

“Having thus accounted for what I had seen, I return again to speak of myself, not doubting that you, my discerning reader, are fully persuaded, by this time, that self is to be the heroine of our tale.

“We had finished our first dish of tea before Henry happened to turn his eyes towards the side on which I

sat: but when he chanced to look that way, I thought that his attention rested on me somewhat longer than usual, and that he manifested an air of concern; on which I changed my posture, and affected to rouse myself, and appeared to endeavour to look cheerful.

"Our tea was scarcely over, when my grandmother and Lucy were called out, and I was left with Henry. He had taken up a book, and continued reading while the servants were taking out the tea-things; but this being accomplished, and the door shut, he laid down the book, went to the open window, and, gathering a sprig of jessamine from a tree which grew without the window, he brought it to me; and in a manner the most gentle, for the society of such females as my grandmother and Lucy had accustomed him to tender and humane feelings, he addressed me by my name, said he feared that I was not well, and asked if he could read to amuse me.

"In return for this, I began to shed tears; for the tears of those who are devoted to self are sometimes surprisingly ready on all those occasions whereby the selfish feelings are more or less affected; and I immediately embraced the resolution to make this young man, whom I had known so short a time, the confidant of my sorrows, though I was far, very far from intending to make him acquainted with the true state of my case.

"To this purpose, I informed him that my grandmother had declared herself displeased with me, because she did not see in me that seriousness which she discovered in Lucy. I then confessed it was true that I was in every respect far, very far inferior to Lucy; that I knew I should never be equal to her, never appear like her; that I looked up to her as an angel; and that I should be fully content only to follow her steps, however far distant: but that I had been unfortunate, in having lost my mother early; in having been brought up in a foreign country, &c. &c. with a great deal more to the same purpose, by which I hoped I had made myself appear to be the most injured and unhappy creature in the world, and that I had represented my grandmother's conduct as unreasonable and unkind.

"I had no means of judging, at that time, of the effect produced by my confessions on my young auditor, as my grandmother and cousin returned to the room immedi-

ately after I had done speaking. I saw, however, with pleasure, that he looked serious, and that he continued so during the rest of the evening.

"When I retired to my apartment at bed-time, I again began to meditate on my situation, and became increasingly convinced, that, in order to obtain and secure my grandmother's esteem, it was necessary for me to accommodate myself to her tastes more than I had hitherto done. I cannot say whether I precisely indulged any reflections on the power which I supposed to be invested in my grandmother of obliging one child more than another in her will; yet I can hardly think that this consideration was entirely without some weight upon my mind. But be this as it may, I saw that the people with whom I now associated had decidedly avowed themselves on the side of religion; and that they were exceedingly active in works of charity; and I perceived that I could do nothing better than to imitate them, at least in appearance. Being thus convinced of what appeared likely to promote my interest in a worldly point of view, I endeavoured to hide my own hypocrisy from myself, by trying to remember all that my mother had taught me of religion, and then endeavouring to fancy that I really was religious, and that I had always been so.

"Among the genteel families that occupied the village in which my grandmother resided, there were some, whose pretensions to strict morality were what the world would call unexceptionable; whose manners were elegant, whose tastes were refined, and whose liberality to the poor was truly commendable. These persons, however, being ignorant of the depravity of their hearts, and of their fallen and lost condition by nature, and their consequent need of the Saviour, entertained no fear of mingling with the world, and of trusting themselves amidst its dangerous allurements.

"The chief of these families was one of the name of Stephens. The lady herself was a widow—had been a beauty; and still, when rouged, and by candle-light, she conveyed no faint idea of what she had been in the height of her bloom. She had a handsome fortune, an elegant house, and four sprightly daughters; and few persons better understood the art of making a house agreeable to visitors of a worldly character than did this lady.

" My grandmother was on good terms with her, and often engaged her in works of charity: nevertheless, it was impossible for these two persons intimately to associate, because they had not one single principle in common, and they were, therefore, continually liable to clash whenever they attempted to converse on any other than the most ordinary subjects. It was, however, deemed right, by my grandmother, that the families should interchange visits once or twice during the year: and it happened, that one of these visits was to take place not long after the day on which I had been engaged in the above-mentioned conversation with the old lady.

" During the interval that elapsed between the time of this conversation and that of the visit, I had certainly fallen more into my grandmother's habits, and accommodated myself more decidedly to her views. I had devoted some part of my time every morning to such studies as she had recommended; I had taken my drawing-lessons, together with Lucy, under Henry Selwyn; I had made some efforts to work for the poor; and I had walked once or twice with my grandmother to see the little school which she supported in the village. All these things I imagined looked well; and I was, in consequence, pleased with myself: but whether my grandmother was satisfied with me or not, I could not tell. At any rate, however, she said nothing: and, as I before remarked, I was content with myself, especially as I believed that I had been growing in the good graces of Henry ever since I had made him a kind of confidant of my sorrows. With respect to Lucy, I could not tell whether I either gained or lost ground in her regards. She, from the first, had been cheerful, open, and affectionate: but though I had made several attempts at what I called gaining her confidence, I could never find myself any nearer my object: and I was at length brought to this persuasion, that she had no confidences to impart; a state of mind which I could by no means comprehend, without forming the conclusion, that, notwithstanding her blooming countenance, her eloquent blushes, and her animated expression, she was actually without a heart.

" But while things were in this state, the day arrived on which we were to visit Mrs. Stephens. On the morning of this day, my grandmother had a slight at-

tack of a rheumatic complaint, to which she was frequently subject, which prevented her from accompanying us to that lady's house; a circumstance which distressed Lucy very much, but which, I must confess, produced in me not the slightest regret: for since I had discovered that the old lady was so close an observer, I never had felt myself entirely at ease in her company.

"I had found out, by means of the servant who assisted in dressing me, that a party unusually large was expected at Mrs. Stephens's: I was, therefore, very solicitous to appear as well dressed as possible, and I consequently felt some difficulty in forming for my appearance a plan which might reconcile my newly adopted character of the sober and penitent Christian, with my ideas of true gentility and fashion, of which I had a variety of fancies and opinions, with which I could not resolve to part.

"I took the first opportunity which the morning afforded of being alone with Lucy, in order to ask her what she intended to wear in the evening. She made me repeat the question twice before she answered it, as if she really did not understand what I meant: and then, looking down upon her clothes, she replied, 'We must have on clean frocks.'

"On hearing this, I uttered a vehement exclamation, and said, 'Indeed, Lucy, I don't know what to make of you: you are the strangest creature in the world.'

"She lifted up her gentle eyes for a moment, and then went on with her work; and I imagined, from the long silence which immediately followed, that she was offended, till at length she herself broke the silence by making some remark respecting our grandmother, and telling me some anecdotes of our venerable parent's kindness to her in her childhood.

"Nothing was, therefore, to be made of Lucy: no ideas of what was proper, or of what might be expected in the appearance of the evening, were to be gathered from her. She was a character wholly inaccessible on these subjects. I therefore trusted to my own judgment; and, as soon as I had dined, went up to my own room, summoned the servant, and spent at least two hours in curling my hair, suiting my ribbons, and arranging my ornaments; and I had scarcely finished all

these preparations, having worked myself up by my solicitude to appear well into a glow and a tremor, when Lucy, perfectly cool and unembarrassed, appeared at my door, in a clean frock indeed, but without one additional decoration to what she wore every day. I now almost wished that every ornament, with which I had been so sedulously adorning myself, were sunk in the depths of the sea. I would have given all that I possessed for the simple, cool, and unembarrassed appearance of Lucy. But there was now no longer time for delay. Henry Selwyn was waiting below; and I was obliged to hurry down stairs after my cousin, and make the best of my way to Mrs. Stephens's house.

"I thought, that, when I appeared in the hall, Henry Selwyn's eye was caught with my figure: he certainly noticed me with some particularity; but what that particular look meant I could not understand. He, however, offered me his arm, while at the same time he took Lucy's hand with a kind of brotherly fondness, and placed it on his other arm; while she began to divert him with an account of some adventure either among the poor, or in her garden and poultry-yard, in which he seemed to take as lively an interest as herself.

"It was rather mortifying for a young lady in the state of mind of which I was then the subject, to be associated constantly with such characters as Lucy and Henry. When Lucy was not present, I could indeed make more of Henry. But, in her company, he was quite as childlike and simple as herself, and was ready to look grave or laugh, to play or work, precisely as she took the lead.

"We soon arrived at Mrs. Stephens's handsome house, and were introduced into a very elegant drawing-room, with windows down to the ground, opening on a lawn, smooth as velvet, beyond which appeared a cascade falling from a little height into a small pool, in the centre of which was the bronze statue of a water-nymph. The heights from which the cascade tumbled were covered with trees and shrubs; and in the darkest of one of its recesses, there appeared a grotto, in which were several couches of moss.

"The season being summer, the windows of the drawing-room were open, admitting from without the fra-

grance of innumerable flowers and aromatic plants, arranged in bow-pots on the lawn.

"So large and so gay was the party assembled in the drawing-room, that the idea of a little dance being intended was instantly suggested to my mind; and I was the more confirmed in this opinion when I perceived that most of the party consisted of young persons. As we entered, the lady of the house came forward to receive us with all that ease and apparent cordiality, which an acquaintance with genteel life commonly imparts; and after giving us a few moments of her attention, she led us to a sofa, where we were permitted to contemplate the scene before us in silence.

"I was no sooner thus left to myself, than I commenced my old employment in a new circle; which was that of comparing my own figure, such as I supposed it to be, with every other lady, young and old, in the room. I do not precisely recollect the result of these my comparisons on that occasion, excepting that I hesitated a little when my eye rested on Miss Harriet Stevens, who was at that time accounted one of the most dashing young ladies in Berkshire; and in this hesitation, I lost a little of my self-complacency. But I generally found, that these comparisons had the effect of either depressing me, so as to render me exceedingly awkward and embarrassed, or of elating me to an extreme, which, in another way, rendered me equally ridiculous.

"Miss Harriet, at the moment when my observation first rested upon her, was engaged in a very animated conversation with a young foreigner, who at that time resided in the neighbourhood. She was a little woman, and he a tall man. He stood up before her, and she was lounging back upon a sofa, and in an affected way looking up to him; but I thought her very interesting, because she wore in her ears extremely large gold hoops, which were then just come into fashion, and she could speak French with volubility. At length, while I was still looking at her, her name was mentioned, and some appeal was made to her by some person in the most distant part of the room: on which occasion, she took the opportunity of getting up, and running across the apartment, in a manner which I thought very pretty, but which really betrayed extreme affectation, she pushed

herself in between two young ladies, who were seated together, and, being followed by her Frenchman, a very loud and animated discussion of some unimportant matter took place in that corner of the room, and for some time attracted the attention of all the rest of the party. At length, the loud peals of laughter and the half-shrieks of the young ladies were somewhat hushed by the important business of taking refreshments, during which repast we saw a party of musicians seating themselves under a tree on the lawn. ‘Symptoms of a dance,’ whispered Henry Selwyn to me, ‘are you a dancer, Miss Caroline?’

“Before I could answer, Mrs. Stephens approached, and, beckoning Lucy towards her, she said to her, in an under tone, but so loud, that we could distinctly hear her, ‘We are going to have a little dance this evening, my dear: you have no objection, I am sure, my sweet Lucy.’

“‘I, Madam!’ said Lucy, with her usual simplicity, ‘how could you think of such a thing?’

“‘O, I am glad of it,’ said Mrs. Stephens; ‘but I understood that your grandmother is not fond of these things.’

“Lucy made no reply, but looked with her wonted composure and sweetness: on which Mrs. Stephens added, ‘Then you and your cousin will not refuse to join us?’

“‘I have never learned to dance,’ replied Lucy; ‘and, as my grandmamma is not here to be consulted, I would not wish to join in the amusement this evening. But I shall not want entertainment; so pray do not think of me, Madam: you know that I am always happy here; you are always so kind to me.’

“‘You are a sweet creature, Lucy,’ returned Mrs. Stephens, taking her hand, ‘a dear little girl, and you always were such. Well, you shall not dance; you shall please yourself, and you shall help me to supply the refreshments.’

“‘Yes,’ said Lucy, smiling, ‘yes, Madam; and I will do any thing else that you may think of.’

“A loud call upon Mrs. Stephens, as lady of the ceremonies, put a stop to any further conversation between her and Lucy: but at the same moment, the

smiling little creature was drawn away into another corner, by a party of young ladies, who, it seems, wished to introduce their brother to her as a partner.

"In the mean time, I observed that Henry Selwyn was watching his little companion very closely, and he then remarked to me, 'I shall be surprised if those girls persuade Lucy to dance: but be assured that they will if they can.'

"'Well,' I added, 'and what harm would there be if they could persuade her?'

"Henry started a little, as I thought, on my proposing this question, and then said, 'But you know that Lucy has not been brought up in that sort of way.'

"'Well,' I said, 'but do you think that there is any harm in dancing?'

"He laughed on my putting this question; it was a laugh of embarrassment; and he said, 'O, I don't pretend to be a judge of these things.'

"'Then,' said I, 'you don't intend to dance yourself to-night?'

"He smiled again, and said something about awkwardness, and blunders, and danger to his partner's shins.

"Here a general stir among the company put a period to our discourse, and all the party crowded out upon the lawn; during which scene of bustle and confusion I lost sight both of Lucy and Henry, but, as being the greatest stranger, I was taken under the wing of Mrs. Stephens herself, who informed me that the young people were going to form sets for cotillons, adding, that, as it was certain that a young lady of my elegant appearance and fine carriage must be able to dance cotillons, she hoped that I would permit her to introduce a partner to me.

"I now found myself somewhat in a strait, being, on the one hand, strongly urged by the desire of displaying my fine figure in the dance, and on the other, fearing that I should make a flaw in my new character, if I did not shew a proper contempt for the vain amusement of dancing. In the mean time, however, it was necessary for me to decide on what I would do, for the critical moment was at hand in which Mrs. Stephens threatened to go in search of a partner. One idea at length fixed my wavering inclination; it was this—that if I should be tempted

to dance, Henry Selwyn would then be left alone to enjoy himself in the company of his favourite Lucy, and this was a thought that I could not bear. I therefore determined to decline dancing; while, at the same time, instead of alleging the simple truth, that my grandmother perhaps would not like it, I pleaded, that my health was in so debilitated a state, as I was the native of a hot climate, that I never could support the fatigue of dancing.

“‘What a pity, my dear,’ returned Mrs. Stephens, in a voice properly tuned to the key of condolence, ‘that you should be deprived, by the delicacy of your constitution, of this charming amusement.’ So saying, and repeating her lamentations, she led me to a chair on the lawn, and then hastened to bestow another mite of her notice on some others of her guests; endeavouring, by thus dividing her attentions as minutely as possible, to make up, as much as lay in her power, for the cold and supercilious contempt of her daughters, who were far too deeply engaged about their own concerns to think of any body else.

“I had scarcely been a moment seated, before Henry and Lucy joined me, and we sat for a while, quietly observing the scene, which was not a little amusing, as within the contracted sphere of observation before us there might be discovered almost every variety of human passion and worldly caprice. I was, however, so imperfectly acquainted with the opinions of my companions in reference to amusements of the kind which we were witnessing, or of their modes of thinking respecting fashionable and gay life, and fashionable and gay people, that I hardly dared to hazard an observation, till Lucy at length spoke, and remarked how beautiful and happy every thing and every person looked.

“‘Happy!’ said Henry, ‘and beautiful too! Those are strong expressions, Lucy, and might do very well if you were standing before a mirror.’

“She either did not hear or did not understand his last words, or she was perfectly unconcerned about what he thought of her, which I could not fully believe. But, be this as it may, no change was visible in her countenance; and I, who had both heard and understood what he said, remarked, with some little ill-humour, that I

wondered that she, who pretended to so much religion, could think that those persons were happy who were doing what was so improper.

"She looked at me with one of those innocent and mild expressions of countenance by which she was so highly distinguished above others, but she made me no answer: on which, Henry said to me, 'It is scarcely a minute ago, Miss Caroline, that you asked me if I thought that there could be any harm in dancing, and now you wonder that Lucy can even think tolerably of any one who joins in a dance. May I be favoured, my dear young lady,' he added, looking me earnestly in the face, 'with your real sentiments upon this subject?'

"'My sentiments!' I repeated: 'can they be questioned? Should I be sitting here, if I really approved of dancing?'

"'O,' said Henry, 'I thought that you came here because nobody asked you to dance.'

"Henry Selwyn was not nineteen, and he had sometimes a little of that unguarded and boyish manner which led him to say very blunt things, but he was generally sorry for them afterwards; and I well knew how to make him so, by bringing tears into my eyes, and assuming an air of uneasiness. As this was one of the occasions which I thought proper to work up into such a scene, I turned my face away, heaved a sigh, and looked as pathetically as circumstances would allow.

"'There, now,' said he, 'I have affronted you, Miss Caroline. I am truly sorry for it: I beg your pardon. Pray excuse me; I did not intend to be so rude: and I am the more to blame, because I thought that you wished to dance, and really had no partner. I ought to have asked you myself.'

"'Not if you considered dancing to be an improper amusement, Mr. Selwyn,' I said.

"'I have no settled opinion on the subject,' he answered. 'I know, indeed, that Mrs. Thornton is not fond of promoting dancing among young people; on this account she would not have us taught: but there is a great difference between a thing which is not desirable, and one that is decidedly wicked.'

"'Mr. Selwyn,' I rejoined, 'I certainly did understand, from what you hinted in the drawing-room, that

my grandmother does not deem dancing to be consistent with the character of a serious Christian ; and I certainly did believe that you thought better of me than to suppose that I would willingly do any thing that was in the least degree displeasing to my excellent parent. You ought not, therefore, to have reproached me.'

"While I uttered these words, I remember that I picked a rose to pieces; and then, throwing the stalk away in a kind of petulant humour, I exclaimed, "O that I had not been born so near the sun ! that I possessed less of that hasty and incautious warmth of feeling and impatience which will, I foresee, ever be raising up enemies against me !" I then muttered some incoherent expressions about not being justly appreciated, and little understood, &c. &c. and in this manner I went on till I had worked up the feelings of my young companion so much, that he quite turned his back upon Lucy, and set himself in good earnest to console me, and restore, if possible, my peace of mind.

"I had now obtained what I desired, which was to see my fair little cousin left wholly in the back-ground ; and my spirits, in consequence, presently became so elevated, that, had any acute and experienced observer been present, it would have been no difficult matter for such a one to have read more of my mind than was desirable. In proportion to the degree to which my spirits rose, I grew talkative, and began to amuse myself and Henry with comments on the dancers : for which comments he shewed so much relish, that I was gradually led on to say many things which would have been much better omitted.

"I cannot tell how long we had been amusing ourselves in this manner, when Lucy, who had remained for some time quite still, suddenly turned round, and whispered one or two words in the ear of Henry ; the consequence of which was such a violent rush of blood into his cheeks, and such an instant change of manner, that my self-love was strongly excited, and I gave Lucy a look which, had my eyes possessed the power of inflicting wounds, would not have left her uninjured. But my angry glances were entirely lost upon her, though not so on Henry ; for, having spoken her mind to her adopted brother, she became again engaged with other matters,

and was looking about her with her usual expression of animation and composure.

“ ‘ You wish to know, perhaps, what Lucy whispered to me just now?’ said Henry. ‘ They were only a few words, but I thank my sweet sister for them: by her remark she gave me a new proof of her pure affection, her truly sisterly love. Her words suggested the hint that it would be better for me to join the dancers than to indulge myself in unkind reflections upon them.’

“ ‘ Lucy,’ I said, ‘ it is I who ought to thank you for this caution; and I should have done so, had you treated me with the same sincerity as that which you used with Mr. Selwyn.’

“ ‘ I should, my dear Caroline,’ she answered, ‘ had you made the same remarks as Henry did.’

“ ‘ Well, I did then,’ I answered, half laughing, ‘ and, indeed, much worse; but you let me alone: for you have not the same interest in me which you have in Henry.’

“ ‘ I am sorry that you should think so,’ returned the little girl, with her usual tranquillity.

“ I became irritated, and, therefore, broke out into some intemperate expressions, calling Lucy a strange little thing, and telling her that I did not fully understand her, but that I could not help believing that she was not quite so simple as she pretended to be.

“ It seems that the little girl had never been accused of hypocrisy before, for she seemed to take my insinuation much to heart. Her delicate cheeks and neck became flushed with that fine and beautiful glow which is visible only in the most lovely complexions, her gentle eyes filled with tears; and we certainly should have had such a scene as I should not altogether have relished, and for which I perhaps should not have been able to find a very reputable apology, if Henry Selwyn had not suddenly taken her hand, and led her away towards another part of the garden, leaving me ready to bite my lips with vexation, and otherwise in no very agreeable situation, as I was sitting alone in a very conspicuous seat, within the view of a set of people to whom I was almost an entire stranger.

“ The breaking up of the dancing-parties, however, soon afforded me some relief. Every one took seats as they could be found or provided; and as the elegant

Miss Harriet condescended to place herself by me, and brought with her several of her gay companions, I presently felt myself, as I thought, in the very centre of attraction of the Beau Monde, and I had quite forgotten my late mortification, till I found myself seated at an elegant supper-table, where, at some little distance on the opposite side, I saw Lucy sitting by Henry Selwyn, no traces of her late short-lived affliction being left on the features of the little girl, excepting such as added a softer and sweeter expression to her dovelike countenance.

“ When I returned home, no hint was dropped, either by Henry or Lucy, reminding me of my unkind behaviour to my young cousin. But I was mortified to find that from that period I seemed rather to have gone back than to have advanced in the good graces of Henry Selwyn, at least, he appeared careful to avoid being alone with me; and Lucy, though she continued entirely unaltered in her manner, yet seemed to feel that I was as little congenial to her as she had seemed to be with me.

“ Thus, much in the manner I have described, passed away the remainder of my first summer in England. In the autumn Henry Selwyn was entered at the University, he being intended for the ministry. On the day of his departure, I was secretly much vexed; but Lucy wept till her eyes were swelled, and she appeared to be really unwell, though she uttered not a single complaint. My self-love, however, was much hurt by the different manner in which Henry took his leave of me and of Lucy; for I did not consider that he was to Lucy as a dear brother, having been brought up in the house with her from her early infancy, while to me as yet he was little more than a common acquaintance.

“ In this manner, however, is the fallen creature, man, blinded by selfishness, in this manner are reason and common sense confounded, and the greater part of our race is thus induced to demand such tributes of exclusive attention, respect, and love, as in the very nature of things few only could possibly receive, and as, if justice were done to all, no individual ought to have. But who can tell what evils to mankind, nay, to the universe itself, have originated from this self-appropriating spirit? Hence proceeded the ruin of angels, and, through them,

the fall of man. Hence have sprung all those destructions of cities, those ruins of provinces, those bloody fields of battle, with the descriptions of which every page of history, from the beginning of time to the present day, is polluted. We look back with horror on the murderous characters of those ancient princes who possessed no splendid qualities to eclipse the darker shades of their characters: but we do not consider, that whenever we desire aught of the good things of this world beyond what are bestowed upon us by the free gift of the Almighty, although we may not yet have used any sinful efforts of our own to obtain them, we nevertheless number ourselves with the Antiochi, the Ptolemies, the Cæsars, and the Pompeys of ancient days; and we may trace in our own hearts not only the seeds of all their abominations, but also the buds and blossoms of all that they ever committed.

"When man ceases to receive his earthly benefits from the hand of his heavenly Father in the same dependent and thankful spirit with which the infant derives its nourishment from its mother's breast, he then begins that war with God, and enters upon that course of open rebellion, which, if carried to its utmost extent, would end in his separating himself entirely from his almighty Parent, and his uniting himself with Satan in that everlasting and awful enmity against his Maker which we are taught to believe will continue as an example of divine displeasure throughout the endless duration of eternity.

"In order to ascertain, and thus truly judge of, the real qualities of our feelings, we ought to endeavour in idea to follow them on to their probable ultimate effects. It may, in the cases of some of us, please God to check us in our mad career, it may please him, by the dispensations of his providence, to smother in embryo many of our evil designs. We may not perhaps be among that unhappy number of persons to whom a temporary success is given to all their projects; yet there is no selfish or ambitious feeling in our bosoms, however it may be concealed from others, which will not lead the person who indulges it to everlasting death, unless it be torn from the heart as a right hand or a right eye from the body.—But to return to my story.

"When Henry took his leave, I was so agitated by

jealousy, that I could not bear to see the tender manner in which he soothed and consoled his weeping cousin. I could not endure to hear him say, ‘I shall not be far off, Lucy; I will come again; and you shall write to me, and I will answer you: and at Christmas you shall see me again, and then we will renew our pleasant walks and our drawing-lessons. Sweet Lucy, do not weep: wipe those gentle eyes; do not weep for me; I will come again.’ In this manner he consoled her, and he looked back at her, as she stood in the window, till his horse had carried him quite out of sight.

“ After the departure of Henry Selwyn, the house appeared to me to lose much of its cheerfulness. Winter was fast approaching, and this was the first indication that I had ever met with of this season in England. I had never seen in the West Indies such a complete fall of the leaf as I then witnessed; I had never seen the woods entirely bare, or the sear foliage driven about by the winter whirlwind; I had never been used to be serenaded by the hollow whistling of the freezing blast; nor had I ever before led so retired a life as that which I then spent. In short, I felt exceedingly oppressed by melancholy; and the consequence was, that, instead of having recourse to useful and active employments for consolation, instead of laying myself out for the benefit of my fellow-creatures, I endeavoured to amuse myself with my own thoughts: and, for this purpose, I sought to be much alone, which it was by no means difficult for me to bring to pass; as, very shortly after the departure of Henry, my grandmother was confined to her bed by a rheumatic complaint, and Lucy, therefore, almost continually attended her.

“ And now, (as it was expressly in order to lay open to my young readers some of the dark windings of the human heart, and thus to hold a mirror to them which may afford them some little assistance in the arduous task of self-examination, that I attempted to write my history,) I shall endeavour to give some little account of the strange and contradictory feelings which at that time took possession of my mind.

“ My strongest and most prevailing sentiment was then, as it had been at all other times, the love of self, and the constant employment of my thoughts was engaged about self, and in considering by what way and

how I could best promote my own happiness in the present circumstances amidst which I was placed. I had become convinced of my errors during the summer: but how far this conviction was more than the mere dictates of reason I dare not say. That religion was a matter of some consequence, that the everlasting welfare of the soul depended upon it, that I had done wrong throughout the former part of my life in living in such carelessness respecting it, and that it behoved me in future to pay such attention to divine things as might ensure my everlasting happiness; so far, I think, my convictions went; and, by degrees, my mind was a little further opened, and I began to form some faint idea of the depravity of my heart: but that idea was faint indeed, and perhaps amounted to no more than might be produced by mere human reason and reflection. My feelings, however, with respect to religion, let them have been what they might, whether derived from man or God, were sufficient to lead me to the observance of certain forms, and rendered my conduct more serious in family and public worship.

"In the mean time, the corruptions of my heart remained wholly unchanged, the idol self reigned within with undiminished sway; and nothing whatever either pleased or affected, elated or depressed me, but as it referred to self. It seemed, at that period, that I had no power to forget self even for a moment; and the only promising sign which I can remember as then existing with respect to me, was, that I was conscious of this devotedness to self, and I sometimes wished that it were otherwise with me. Such, however, was the prevalence of this feeling, that I could neither speak nor move in the presence even of a servant, without thinking of my appearance. I was always fancying that I should make a fit subject for a beautiful or an interesting picture on such and such occasions; and, with a view to these my imaginary pictures, I often, in the presence of the physician, either knelt at my grandmother's feet, gently rubbing them with my hand, or hung over her pillow when the rector of the parish came to converse with her, or stood at the parlour-window extending my hand to some poor beggar when persons were passing the gate; or observed various other little acts of eye-service, which

I need not describe, as one or two instances may suffice for suggesting the ideas of a thousand more.

"In the mean time, I could not help envying Lucy, because I could not detect in her any symptoms whatever of this desire of display: on the contrary, every thing commendable that she did appeared to flow freely from the heart. No one even imagined, till a long time afterwards, how much this little girl did for the relief of her infirm grandmother; how frequently, when she heard her venerable parent stir, she rose out of her little bed in the night, and stood by her side, anticipating all her wants, and soothing all her pains; and I have not unfrequently seen the tear tremble in her eye when the servants have offered to relieve her from the office of taking up her grandmother's meals.

"Sometimes, when I witnessed all this, I tried to think that she waited on her grandmother in this way in order to obtain from her a greater legacy at her death; but I could not long entertain so coarse an idea. Was not Lucy as obliging to the poorest creature in the village who stood in need of her assistance? How was I to solve this problem? I could not understand it; I could not then comprehend that glorious process by which the nature of man is entirely changed, by which he is emptied of self, by which the Almighty is restored to his throne in the heart, while holy love to God and to one's neighbour becomes the fulfilment of every law.

"After having thus spent three months as gloomy as any that I had ever known, my grandmother recovered so far as to appear again below stairs, Lucy returned to her former occupations, and, to crown all, Henry Selwyn returned from the University.

"We enjoyed a very pleasant Christmas: there was a great deal of hospitality, and such hospitality as is recommended by our Saviour. My grandmother also found much work for us in preparing garments for the poor; an employment in which I should not formerly have found much pleasure: but Henry Selwyn was present to read to us while we were at work, and, after the tedious monotony of the last three months, every change was delightful.

"I was still, however, uneasy at the friendship subsisting between Henry and Lucy, which seemed to have

grown stronger from their short separation, and to possess all the sweetest characters of brotherly and sisterly attachment.

"Thus passed the Christmas, and Mr. Selwyn returned to college: in the spring vacation he, however, came again, and then my grandmother, being in tolerably good health, and, as usual, in a very sweet state of mind, I witnessed a short renewal of that peculiar kind of happiness which struck me so much on my first arrival in England.

"There is something in the bursting forth of spring so congenial with the finest feelings of man, so abundant in the production of hope and innocent delight, that its appearance seldom fails of reviving the spirits even of those persons who have been in the habit of witnessing it year after year from early infancy. But I had never before known the charms of an English April; I had never before inhaled the mild fragrance of the wild violet and pale primrose; and I was certainly much touched with this new world of budding beauties which surrounded me—touched, I repeat, and almost led to forget myself on the occasion, when, unfortunately, I met with a volume of Thomson's Seasons; where finding some of his beautiful descriptions of spring, I took credit to myself for the discovery, and, from that period, I could not speak upon the subject of the vernal beauties without being haunted with conceits of my own good taste and superior discernment, by which I no doubt rendered myself as ridiculous as needs be in the estimation of those who had any insight into character.—But to proceed with my story.

"I have still, selfish and unfeeling as I then was, some tender remembrances of the last day on which Henry Selwyn was with us at that period. It was one of those charming days in which all the perfumes of the spring were diffused throughout the air, and in which new life seemed to be given to all nature. My grandmother, who had not been out of doors for many months, proposed an airing in her garden-chair, and we all prepared to attend her. The relief of some poor person was, as usual, to be the object of our expedition; and we spent one whole morning in our ramble, exploring scenes which, for their freshness and beauty, I thought

I had never seen equalled. Henry on this occasion was gay beyond all that I had ever before witnessed in him. He must needs dress Lucy's bonnet with primroses, and he indulged himself in that kind of playful raillery which we sometimes see in young people, and which, when under proper restraints, is neither unpleasing nor blameable. His feelings, however, were very tender; for, on my grandmother exhibiting some symptoms of weakness in endeavouring to get out of her carriage at the door of a cottage, he betrayed considerable agitation, though he said nothing.

"The day following Henry Selwyn left us, but, though he was absent, I still continued to think much of him, neither did I make it a matter of principle, as I ought on many accounts to have done, not to indulge myself in these thoughts; for the very excellencies of this young man, which were obvious to every beholder, ought to have put me on my guard, had I possessed even common prudence: his regard also for Lucy ought to have been a check to me, even had my self-love alone influenced my conduct. But what are all considerations of mere worldly prudence, when they are assaulted by the force of passion?

"It was not long after the departure of Henry that my grandmother was again taken ill. I did not understand at that time the nature of her disorder, but I now know that it was a paralytic stroke, for she never afterwards appeared to be altogether herself.

"At this time, we had a visit from my cousin Selina, (the eldest daughter of my uncle Ormond,) who was the elder sister of Lucy. My grandmother, before her illness, had expressed a wish to see Selina; and an invitation had, therefore, been sent to the young lady, who arrived at the time I speak of, her father, Mr. Ormond, having just before received a call from the Continent either on business or pleasure, it little matters which.

"I had expected to see in Selina a second Lucy, and a second rival; and accordingly, when she stepped out of the carriage, and ran into the arms of her sister, I looked impatiently till she should turn her face towards me. My quick eye in a moment discerned the same soft complexion, fine hair, and lovely figure, which had so often disturbed me in Lucy; and when, at length, she

came forwards to salute me, I beheld, with inexpressible sorrow, a set of features equally charming, and I could not help internally lamenting my misfortunes in having two such pretty cousins. ‘In some families,’ I said to myself, ‘there are twenty, thirty, nay, forty grandchildren, and not a beauty among them; and I—unhappy I—have only two cousins, and they are both charming!’

“Well, but notwithstanding this severe calamity, it was needful for me to seem cheerful, nay, happy, on the occasion of my meeting with my cousin; and I accordingly took one of her hands, while Lucy held the other, and led her into the parlour.

“Her first question was to ask for our grandmother; when, being told of her situation, and that she could not leave her room, she shrugged up her shoulders, and exclaimed, ‘What, in bed? does she keep her bed? Only think of that!’

“Lucy and I both looked at her, but neither of us made any reply: on which, she began to give an account of her journey; and I presently found out, that in one respect at least she was like myself, for she had a pretty strong persuasion that she could not pass any where without drawing all eyes upon her. Though she had travelled down into Berkshire in her father’s carriage, driven by an old coachman who had lived in the family ever since she was born, yet, in her own estimation, she had encountered more perils by the way than have fallen to the lot of many a one who has made the tour of Christendom. At the inn where she had got out to breakfast, it is hard to say what she had suffered, what inconveniences she had endured, what alarms she had encountered, what emotions her appearance had excited. ‘Really, cousin Caroline,’ she said, ‘if I had had to travel into Northumberland instead of Berkshire, I would have renounced all food rather than have exposed myself to such annoyances.’

“I know not what reply I made to all this; but Lucy’s remark on the occasion I shall never forget. ‘I cannot understand, dear sister,’ she said, ‘what you are talking about. Were the people rude to you at the inn? What did they say to you? Surely they would not say any thing impertinent?’

“‘Say any thing impertinent!’ repeated Selina, laugh-

ing; ‘O, Lucy, Lucy! you are Lucy still, I see. Cousin Caroline, have you not found out that my little sister is the prettiest little fool in the world? I will answer for her, that if you could but persuade her that grandmamma thought it right, she would trundle an orange-barrow through every street in London, crying fresh oranges, without feeling the slightest uneasiness on the occasion.’

“Lucy still made no answer; and I replied, ‘There is nothing in the world that I covet so much as Lucy’s composure. I would give all that I have on earth for her self-control. It is such a comfort, such an advantage, to be always cool and easy, like Lucy.’

“‘Cool and easy!’ replied Selina, laughing: ‘a pretty description of a young lady!’

“‘O, I meant no harm,’ I replied; ‘none in the least: I was not thinking of what I said.’

“Another laugh ensued; after which, I found myself quite at home with my new cousin, and felt perfectly easy in her presence, my envious feelings with respect to her being considerably allayed, though I could still discern that she had very pretty features.

“During our extraordinary mirth, it may be asked what Lucy was doing. In reply to which, I must tell you, that this lovely young creature had, as usual, some work which she was desirous of finishing with all speed for the use of some poor person. This work had been laid aside at the moment of her sister’s arrival, but had been resumed as soon as our conversation took the inexplicable turn above mentioned; and Lucy availed herself of the first pause in our conversation, to remind Selina of some old woman in the neighbourhood, whom she had formerly known, and to say that she was making a gown for her against Easter-Sunday: on saying which, she held up her cumbrous job, and exhibited a common chintz, of a very large pattern, and cut out after the most obsolete fashion.

“Here was matter for new merriment on the part of the town-bred sister, who remarked, that she was sure that Lucy would have no objection to take a job of this kind into one of the most elegant drawing-rooms in town.

“Thus have I described my first interview with my

cousin Selina; of whom I readily formed this opinion, that she was what she called her sister—a pretty fool. I never, indeed, had reason to suppose her particularly wise in any sense of the word; but she wanted not art, and she was exceedingly shrewd in the promotion of her own interests, that is, as far as she understood them. She was also, like myself, and like every other unconverted person on the face of the earth, a heroine in her own opinion, and desirous of being deemed so by others.

"It may perhaps be asked what I mean by this assertion, that all unregenerate persons, and too many others, of whom we might expect better things, are heroes and heroines, according to their own conceits, and that all naturally desire to be thought such by others.

"My answer is, that both a hero and a heroine is a person who is distinguished above the general mass of mankind by some peculiar and remarkable quality, by which the person so distinguished is rendered worthy of particular honour, love, or approbation, and thus becomes especially liable to the persecutions of envious and designing characters.

"According to the very nature of things, few persons can be heroes. But many may desire to be such: and I venture to maintain, that all unregenerate persons desire this, and that all vain persons believe that they have in some degree obtained this their object, and, however low, mean, and despicable they may be, that they are, in the eyes of some one or other, objects of admiration and envy.

"It has, during many years, been the custom for religious persons to cry down the writings of modern novelists; and often, indeed, with good reason, because these works have commonly a decided tendency to encourage and foster this selfish principle of the desire of distinction. All the principal, and even all the best, female characters in the old novels, are represented as heroines not only in fact, but also in their own opinions; and, consequently, these writings in general present a false view of life and character, by setting up individuals as particular objects of admiration and persecution, and thus inducing young people to believe that there are in society certain persons on whom the eyes of others are fixed with wonder and amazement, an idea which is ge-

nerally incorrect: for the benefits and advantages of life are more equally and impartially distributed than the young are aware of, as an attentive observer will soon perceive; one person possessing one advantage, and another another; and a brilliant talent being often overbalanced by some conspicuous defect.—But to return to novels.

“I do not dispute that their effects are not generally bad; but, at the same time, I wish to point out, that the same inflammatory consequences frequently spring from other sources as well as from novels and plays. There are many heroines in the world besides those who are persecuted for their beauty, and none who are in a more dangerous state than those who have made religion their stepping-stone to conceits of this kind. There are always to be met with a certain set of weak, though good people, who delight in puffing up religious persons with such ideas—in leading the evangelic preacher, who enjoys a great benefice in England, to suppose that he is an example of heroic fortitude in enduring the scoffs and taunts of a few low-bred infidels; in inducing the young professor to imagine that he is enduring such spiritual conflicts as none ever before experienced, and in leading such persons to talk and write continually about themselves, under the pretence of discoursing of religion; and, in fine, in using the profession of religion (the true tendency of which, in reality, is only to humble) to inflate and excite the pride of the heart to the most dreadful extent.—But to return to my history.

“I soon found that Selina was as fully alive to her own interests as myself, that she was, in fact, a heroine in her own opinion, but one of the most common sort, a mere novel-reading heroine; while my selfishness lay considerably deeper, and was not ashamed to assume the garb of religion. Nevertheless I was much amused by Selina, as long as her interests did not interfere with mine. I was pleased to hear her ridicule Lucy; and, as I found that she made no effort to conceal her foibles from our grandmother, I did not fear so much from her in that quarter as I did from Lucy.

“Selina continued with us some time; and we were expecting the return of Henry Selwyn very soon, when my grandmother, who had appeared to be getting better,

had a second stroke; and, about the same time, we received information, that, by the sudden death of a distant relation of Henry Selwyn, a considerable property had devolved to him which had not been expected.

"Soon after this information had been communicated to us, the following dialogue took place between Selina and me.

"'Who is this Henry Selwyn?' said I to Selina: 'and how comes he to have been brought up by our grandmother?'

"She informed me that he was the son of a very old friend of the family, and had been left to the guardianship of our grandmother on the death of his parents. 'And now, Caroline,' she added, 'I have given you an account of his pedigree, it is your part to describe his person; for, strange to say, I never saw him.'

"I shall not repeat the description that I gave of him, but shall merely say that I concluded my description with these words: 'It does not matter, I conceive, Selina, what you and I may think of him; for your little silly sister has as completely secured her interest in his favour, as I doubt not she will do in that of our grandmother.'

"This was said in a confidential tone: in reply to which, Selina answered, in the same manner, 'Why, you simpleton, don't you know that my grandmother has nothing in her power, unless it may be her gold repeater and the silver spoons, and I am sure Lucy is welcome to them, as far as I am concerned; for she deserves something for the trouble that she takes. At grandpapa's death,' she added, with a childish lisp which she often affected, 'at grandpapa's death, the property was settled between his two daughters; and you, Caroline, as the representative of one, will have one half, and I and Lucy the other, as the representatives of the other. Grandmother can't help it, or I am sure I should not have sat so easy, and let Lucy wait upon her and wheedle her as she does. And I think, that if you did not know before what I have now told you, you are a greater goose than I took you for, to give Lucy so many opportunities as you have done.'

"'But,' said I, 'I suppose that Lucy knows the state of affairs.'

"'I really can't tell,' returned Selina, shrugging up

her shoulders; ‘I never enter into conversation with her. I never could. She and I have not half an idea in common: and if I do but hint to her a word about grandmamma’s death, she begins to cry and sob, as you said she did at Mrs. Stephens’s rout; and we have no Henry Selwyn here to take her aside and give her sugar-plums.’

“The entrance of Lucy put an end to our discourse: but I have reason to think that some things which then passed in our minds were not very soon effaced from them.

“The time, as I before said, was now coming when Henry was to arrive; a circumstance which was equally desired, I imagine, by Lucy, myself, and Selina. Just at this crisis, the fashionable and admired Miss Harriet Stephens began to cultivate my acquaintance, and that of Selina; a circumstance which rather puzzled me at the time, but which I afterwards found it no difficult matter to account for. I began, also, at this juncture, rather to wish to free myself from the close intimacy which Selina had formed with me. ‘Henry,’ I thought, ‘will judge of me by my intimacy with this girl; and he will form a contemptible opinion of me from this circumstance.’ I therefore endeavoured to encourage her intercourse with Harriet Stephens; and, as these ladies seemed to possess very similar tastes, I soon had the satisfaction of finding myself more at leisure to pursue my own caprices.

“It had been only a very few weeks since Henry had left us: yet, when, at the appointed time, which was the beginning of the long vacation, he rode up to the door, and sprang from his horse, I thought that I never before saw him look so well. Whether he were really improved, or whether the few thousands that he had lately received had added fresh graces to his appearance, I know not; but certainly I blushed when he came up to address me; and I looked anxiously to see how he would receive Selina, whom I introduced to him as the sister of Lucy.

“During this short moment, I had time enough to wish that he might not be pleased with her. But I had not much leisure to dwell either on my hopes or fears; for, after having made a slight bow, he eagerly enquired

after Mrs. Thornton and Lucy, adding, that he hoped the former was not so ill as report said.

"I now recollect that it was needful for me to look serious: and I answered in as pathetic a tone as I could. 'And Lucy,' he said, 'where is Lucy? where shall I find her?'

"And he was going out to seek her, when she ran in, and flew towards him, and seemed almost on the point of throwing her arms round his neck, when, suddenly checking herself, she burst into tears, and said, 'O Henry, Henry! thank God you are come again!'

"Never shall I forget—I, who was such an admirer of picturesque arrangement, particularly when I thought that my own dear self presented the most prominent and interesting figure in the groups—how very lovely this youthful pair appeared, as they sat together on a sofa, her innocent face being bathed with tears, and he endeavouring to console her with all the tenderness of pure affection, the strength of reason, and the ardour of true piety. 'Grieve not, my Lucy,' he said, 'for our dear parent, as for one without hope. She will ever live in our memory; and we will, with the divine blessing, modify our lives to her pleasure. She, who made our childhood so peculiarly happy, shall regulate our future measures. In all that we do, we will consult her taste, even though she may be dead. Our house, our furniture, our garden, our trees, and our habitual conduct, shall be arranged and adjusted so as we think she would have wished them to be, had she lived to see them.'

"More he added, but it was in a low tone, and perhaps not meant for our ears. But I had heard enough, and so had Selina. We looked at each other with amazement. 'Our house, our garden, our future life,'—'This language is plain indeed,' I thought, 'and Lucy receives it not as if it were new and strange to her.'

"I was truly mortified to think that things were gone so far; and I was at the same time shocked at the wish which now more powerfully than ever influenced my mind, of stepping in between this happy and lovely pair, and becoming myself the object of the same pure and ardent affection as Henry professed for Lucy. And thus I argued with myself, and endeavoured to silence the voice of conscience.—'Lucy's affection for Henry is

but that of a sister for a brother; it is such a regard as might well subsist, even after he had married another. Should he marry me, she shall have a home under our roof; she shall never want a friend. I will be a sister to her; I will guard her inexperience, and protect her simplicity.'

"In the course of a few minutes, these and many more thoughts of the same kind passed rapidly through my mind; and I should have indulged in them probably much longer, had I not seen the eyes of Selina fixed upon me with a more enquiring and penetrating look than I at one time thought her capable of.

"It is no difficult matter for two selfish persons to read each other's thoughts. Whether wise or foolish, they seem to possess a kind of instinct by which they find each other out: and I am sensible, that, at the moment of which I speak, Selina and I became mutually acquainted with some things in each other's minds, which we would gladly have concealed. She, however, had either less feeling, or had been more inured to the arts of the world, than myself; therefore, when it was signified that Mrs. Thornton wished to see Henry, and he had left the room accompanied by Lucy, she instantly began to make her comments on what had just before passed between her sister and the young gentleman; she made also several remarks in favour of his appearance, and said, that she thought we should both be great fools if we allowed that little girl to carry off such a prize.

"Never was amazement greater than mine on hearing these words: and I could only say, 'O Selina! you astonish me.'

"In reply, she burst into a loud laugh, saying, 'Why, I think that there is no nonsense which a human being could utter, which you would not believe. Though you pretend to so much cleverness, I do not consider you to be one bit wiser than Lucy herself.'

"So saying, she changed the subject, and began to talk about the fashions in a new magazine, leaving me more in doubt as to her real sentiments than I had been a minute before.

"When Henry Selwyn returned into the parlour, he looked particularly serious. It was tea-time, and the tea-equipage was on the table. He sat on a sofa near

me, and opposite Selina. He looked round him, sighed once or twice, and then, trying to rouse himself, 'I am sorry,' he said, 'to see Mrs. Thornton so much changed. It is painful to me, when I come home, not to find her in her usual place,'—directing his eye, as he spoke, towards her chair, which was now occupied by Selina.

"Well said, indeed!" cried Selina, laughing as she spoke. 'Mr. Selwyn certainly does understand the art of complimenting in its last and utmost perfection. Only think, my dear Caroline, think of a young gentleman looking at a lady's chair, and regretting that it is not filled by her grandmother instead of herself.'

"There are some speeches which appear to be so thoroughly ill-timed and ill-placed, and which are in themselves so particularly ridiculous, that they fail not to throw the most determined gravity off its balance. Such was the remark which I have recited; and its effect was to produce a laugh from every one present: but the laugh was painful to all but Selina; and to Henry especially so, for he immediately sunk into silence. On which, Selina, wholly unabashed, immediately introduced some other subject, and rattled away in a manner which appeared to be decidedly uncongenial with the feelings of the rest of the party. She, however, persevered, till Henry seemed drawn into something like attention, and so far roused, that he began to make enquiries respecting his old neighbours, and, together with others, he mentioned the Stephenses.

"Here was a new subject furnished for the volubility of Selina, who entertained us for more than half an hour with anecdotes about her dear Harriet Stephens; and would probably have given us another half hour's nonsense of the same kind, if she had not just then remembered that she had an appointment with this young lady, and, in consequence, she took her leave for the present.

"Being thus left alone with Henry, and finding that Lucy still continued with our grandmother; for the old lady, as her intellect became more feeble, expressed increasing affection for her dear child; I waited for a moment, till he should speak, and give me some intimation of his feelings with respect to the late discourse. 'O, Miss Caroline,' he said, as he shut the door after Selina, 'and that is Lucy's sister? O, how unlike!

Well, but she is gone for a short time—I wish it were a longer. And now,' he said, 'that we have a little breathing-time, pray tell me, when was my dear old friend taken ill? and how does our Lucy bear it? Pray let me have some rational account of these things from you.'

"While he was speaking, self again began to set me at work to calculate. I found that I gained as much by the forwardness of Selina, in the comparison, as I lost by the unaffected modesty of Lucy. Henry, I perceived, had conceived a dislike to Selina; and, in consequence, was favourably disposed towards me as the better of the two. 'And he thus regards me,' I thought, 'because he deems me more serious and more sympathizing. It is necessary, therefore, for me to cherish in him this his good opinion of me.'

"All this passed in a moment through my mind; and I, therefore, lost no time in giving such answers to his enquiries, as I trusted would produce on his mind the best possible impression of my sensibility. You may perhaps ask me whether I was sensible, at the moment, of my acting an hypocritical part. I answer, that I certainly must have been: for I knew that my grandmother's illness disturbed me very little; that I had been very easy respecting either her life or death ever since I knew that I was to be a gainer by the latter; and that I never troubled myself so far as to make a single enquiry about Lucy's health, or the state of her spirits. How then can it be supposed that I was not conscious of my duplicity, when I pretended to sympathize so sincerely in Henry's feelings respecting my grandmother and Lucy?

"Henry and I sat conversing for some time. At length, when it became dusk, he expressed a wish that Lucy would come down again: but Lucy not appearing, he asked me to walk with him on the gravel before the house.

"It would have been very easy for me to have said, 'Lucy seldom appears below but at meals,' and to have offered to take her place, and send her down to him. But I made no such remark, nor any such offer; on the contrary, I accompanied him out of doors, and drew him on to converse, by speaking of the excellencies of my

grandmother, and of other subjects which I knew would be agreeable to him.

"At supper, we met again. Lucy and Selina were present. Selina had much to tell us about her walk. Lucy looked fatigued and pale, and was unable to enter into conversation; and Henry Selwyn seemed oppressed by many painful feelings.

"The next morning, we all met again at breakfast; after which, Lucy was leaving the room as usual, when Henry, taking her hand as she passed by his chair, said, 'And are you going to absent yourself all day? Cannot we walk together, or draw together, or read together, as we used to do? Cannot you spare me a little time?'

"She stood still behind his chair, and looked sorrowfully down upon him, while the tears stood in her eyes. 'Oh, Henry!' she replied, 'it is not as it once was. Our dear grandmother cannot now go out with us; and I cannot leave her now. But perhaps she may get better; and then we shall be happy again.'

"She was nearly bursting into tears, but, making a violent effort, she restrained herself, and said, 'But Caroline and Selina will walk with you, and draw with you, and go with you to see the school, and the poor people. I am sure I can answer for them.'

"'They are very good,' replied he, coldly: 'but, Lucy, might I not come to see your grandmother?'

"'Sometimes,' she answered, sorrowfully: 'but my poor grandmother,'—and she hesitated; and then added, 'she cannot enjoy your company now.'

"'Well,' said he, with a sigh, 'if it must be so:' and, kissing her hand, he let her pass on out of the room.

"After she was gone, he sat for a few minutes silent; then, rising up, he lounged to the window, sat awhile in it, picking the jessamine to pieces, and then came back to the table, where I had settled myself to draw, though I believe that I had not previously touched a pencil since I had seen him last.

"Henry was remarkably fond of drawing; and, as I expected, the bait took. He presently began to busy himself with the pencils; and, after a short time, he was as fully engaged as I could wish in the work of instructing me.

"Thus we contrived to pass away this morning, and also several others. In the evening, we walked. Sometimes Lucy was of the party, but Harriet Stephens and Selina were with us much oftener.

"At first, when Lucy was not with us, he was restless and impatient, but insensibly he seemed to become more reconciled to her absence; and I was surprised sometimes to see how high his spirits would rise, when stimulated by the flippant pertness of Selina, and the sharper repartees of Harriet Stephens. That both these young ladies had a view to the thousands, more or less, of which he had lately become the possessor, I have little doubt; and that they had also no objection to the individual who possessed these thousands, and that we all three were alike influenced by the desire of eradicating the image of Lucy from his heart, I also am assured; and, in consequence, we played into each other's hands, to a certain degree, in order to bring this desirable end to pass: but if we agreed among each other, it was because each despised the others, and each believed that her own success would be ensured, if the little rival could but be set on one side.

"With these views, however, which I am persuaded we all cherished, there is no wonder that we united in one effort to amuse Henry; neither will it be a matter of astonishment, that this young man should have been a little drawn aside, when attacked by such united forces: nevertheless, though he was sometimes induced to forget himself, to forget his old habits of devotedness to Lucy, to forget the sufferings of his parental friend, yet, whenever he saw his Lucy again, the tide of his affections seemed to roll back into its former channel; and he not unfrequently caused me to renounce, on these occasions, all hopes of overcoming affection such as this.

"In the mean time, while Selina laughed and talked away, at random, and while Harriet Stephens endeavoured to carry all before her by a kind of dashing impudence, I was sensible that I was the only one of the three for whom Henry entertained the slightest respect. When he spoke on religious subjects, I alone could either answer him, or seem to understand him; and it was to me only that he ever appeared at all inclined to open his mind.

"During this time, Lucy calmly yet firmly pursued her duty by the bedside of her grandmother, who, growing more and more attached to her, and gradually becoming less and less under the influence of reason, as her intellects failed through the force of her disease, this little girl was induced to make efforts which presently shewed themselves in their baleful effects; as her eyes were becoming languid, her cheeks pale, and a kind of fixed sorrow was now settling itself on her face.

"The progress from glowing health to the extreme of languor was so gradual in the lovely Lucy, that it would have been impossible for the most accurate observer to ascertain the precise time of its commencement. It was first observed by Henry, (and he indeed was the first who remarked it to me,) one evening, when he had been walking with Harriet, Selina, and myself. We had been in very high spirits; there had been much laughing and talking; and this gaiety had continued on the part of some of us till we had actually come under my grandmother's bed-chamber-window, in which Lucy alone was visible, sitting reading by the last glow of the setting sun.

"As soon as she saw us, she came down, and, meeting us in the hall, she accosted us with one of those faint smiles with which persons often meet those to whom they wish to appear more cheerful than they really are. The faintness of her smile seemed to reproach us all with unpardonable levity; and Miss Harriet, in particular, asked how Mrs. Thornton did, expressing a hope that she was no worse.

"'No,' said Lucy, with a sigh, 'no worse, but very ill:' and she walked to the window, and leaned against the frame.

"Henry followed her to the window, and spoke to her. I know not exactly what he said, but I distinguished these words: 'Are you displeased, Lucy?'

"'No, Henry,' she answered. 'Why should I be displeased?' and she suddenly turned away, and went out of the room, and we saw her no more till the next morning, when she again appeared pale and depressed; and it seemed that her appearance had communicated her uneasiness to Henry.

"After breakfast, I was left alone with him; on which

occasion he drew his chair near to me, and questioned me closely about what had passed on the evening before. He remarked, that he thought Lucy was much altered, that he feared he had in some way offended her, that she was not open and cheerful with him, as formerly; in short, that something was wrong, and that he wished I would give him my opinion on the subject.

“In reply, I might have said, ‘Lucy is indeed altered, because she is unhappy, fatigued, or unwell: she needs comfort and support from you, whereas you demand it from her.’ Yet I made no such answer; but rather insinuated, that I thought her behaviour on the last night extraordinary, and that I feared that something had offended her, though I qualified this remark by saying that Lucy had in general the sweetest of dispositions, and who was there on earth that was perfect?

“Henry seemed more hurt by his own fancies and my insinuations than I expected, a circumstance which proved to me the strength and ardour of his regard, and I almost repented of what I had done: but my self-interest was engaged on my side, and I therefore allowed him to continue in the mistake into which he had fallen.

“Were I to point out one single proof of my selfishness more base and cruel than another, this is the one on which I perhaps might fix most unquestionably. But what self-deception often ensues, when we attempt to weigh one crime against another, or to say that one wilful sin is heavier than another?

“This action, however, which I have just described, was the first which inflicted upon my mind strong feelings of guilt. I do not remember my ever having been thoroughly out of humour with myself till this moment: my remorse, however, was not sufficient to induce me to undo what I had done; for in this contest my selfishness still prevailed, as, indeed, alas! it did, till my fate on earth was sealed, and every hope of peace in this world was for ever excluded.—But no more of this.

“Immediately after my conversation with Mr. Selwyn, he had walked out, and was met by Selina, either accidentally or intentionally. In a short time, they both returned together; and Selina remarked, in her seemingly careless manner, that she had observed that Mr. Selwyn was very much out of spirits, and that, also, as

Lucy had looked very sullen at breakfast, she doubted not that they had had a quarrel.

"Henry shook his head, and was silent.

"'Lucy is jealous of you, Henry,' said she: 'I know she thinks that you have neglected her, and that you like the company of others better than hers.'

"'Has she said so?' asked Mr. Selwyn.

"'No,' said Selina, 'she has not, indeed, said so much: for, to tell you the truth, she never mentions you at all; she has other objects in view at present.'

"'Other objects!' repeated Mr. Selwyn.

"'Yes,' replied the other, laughing; 'a view to a handsome legacy, over and above what grandpapa left us.'

"'Tis false!' said Henry, in a passion, and reddening to his very forehead. 'Lucy mercenary! my simple, lovely little Lucy forming plans to get money! What unaccountable suggestions!'

"A loud laugh, on the part of Selina, followed this exclamation of young Selwyn's; and she immediately remarked, as she once before had said to me, 'Why, Henry Selwyn, what a simpleton you must be, to suppose that I meant any thing more than a jest! If I had accused Lucy of loving a doll, and coveting a baby-house, I might have expected that you would give me some credit: but for me seriously to call that little simpleton a mercenary legacy-hunter, why, I might as well have compared her with Alexander the Great!'

"'I wish, however,' returned Henry, thoughtfully, 'that you had said nothing about it: the palate revolts at poison as well as the stomach.'

"'The palate,' repeated she, laughing, and tapping him on the back, 'is not the only part affected: I am afraid, that in your heat you swallowed a drop or two of the distasteful potion that I presented to you. But, somehow or other,' she added, 'you and Lucy have certainly fallen out; and I would advise you to make it up as soon as possible, lest Lucy should take a fancy to the smart young physician (mentioning his name) who is so attentive at my grandmother's bedside.'

"Here was a stroke of art which even I did not expect, and which seemed to come with such a stunning force, that neither Henry nor I could for some minutes

look up; during which critical interval Lucy came in, perhaps with some consciousness of having looked too serious at breakfast, and she now appeared to be desirous to remove all painful impressions by a cheerful expression of countenance.

"As I heard her gentle step, I looked up, and never, I think, saw her appear more lovely. The rich bloom of her cheeks had indeed faded to the softest blush, the blue veins of her temples were distinctly seen, and a languid lustre beamed from her gentle eyes. As she approached, Henry also looked up, and, on seeing her, he instantly dropped his eyes. I felt a strong inclination to do the same, yet anxiety and shame prevented me, and I therefore endeavoured to look on her as on one whom I had in nowise injured. But the effort was violent. Selina was the only individual of the party who was able to address her, which she did without the least embarrassment. 'Well, little lady,' she said, (for it was always with a diminutive of some kind that she addressed her sister,) 'how have you left your invalid?'

"'Not worse,' was Lucy's answer, as she at the same time tried to smile: 'thank God, she has no pain.'

"'You look pale, my fairy queen,' said Selina. 'We must consult the physician about you, as well as for the old lady.'

"'He can do me no good,' Lucy rejoined, at the same time looking anxiously towards Henry.

"'O,' said Selina, 'you would have another story to tell if Mr. Selwyn were not present.'

"'Sister,' replied Lucy, 'I never understand above half of what you say: but this I believe, that I want no physician, and that, if my heart were at ease, I should soon be as well as ever.' So saying, she sat down behind the sofa on which her sister was seated, and, leaning her head against its back, burst into tears.

"All ceremony was now over with Henry; all doubts, all suspicions, all piques, seemed in a moment to be washed away by this one fair shower of tears. He rose up in haste as soon as he perceived them, he ran to her, entreated her forgiveness for his coldness, assured her that she was now more dear to him than ever, and, in my presence and in that of her sister, he made a more

direct and unequivocal avowal of his regard for her than he had ever before done, at least before us.

"She said but little to him in reply; but begged that he would not be angry with her again, and assured him that she should now be once more as happy as it was possible for her to be while her grandmamma was in a state of suffering.

"Thus I beheld all my designing schemes frustrated at once, and followed by severe mortification: with this my punishment began.

"The next day after this occurrence had taken place, a letter arrived from a remote part of the kingdom, requiring the presence of Mr. Selwyn, on some account which I cannot well recollect, but I think it was to attend the last illness of his only remaining relation. As Henry expected to be back in about ten days or a fortnight, and as he was on such affectionate terms with his Lucy, every cloud being removed, he took leave of her with much composure, yet with a tenderness which seemed to say, 'We are intended for each other, we must never more be at variance.'

"I witnessed this parting scene, and my own selfish feelings were again engaged in contest in my mind with justice and humanity. At this time, however, I have reason to think that there was some brighter light in my soul than I had formerly perceived; for I felt that this selfishness was extremely wrong, and that I ought not to indulge it; at the same time, I could not bear to relinquish my heroic views and feelings of self-love: in consequence of which, I began to represent my case to my own mind as something very extraordinary and out of the common way. I painted myself, in my own imagination, as a second *Perpetua* or *Blandina*; as one called upon by religion to make the sacrifice of all that was dear to me on earth, and to suffer incredible trials.

"By this time, having learned that it was a frequent custom with pious persons to write journals and memorandums touching their own state, (a practice by no means without its use to characters whose minds are at all alive to a sense of their real state, but dangerous to those in whom the power of selfish feelings is not shaken,) I began to write such a memento myself; and I filled many pages with pathetic statements of my own case,

mingled with such ready-made religious expressions and pious phrases as I had acquired by reading and conversation.

"And now I began to regret that I had not one young friend to whom I could open my heart, expatiate on my sufferings and trials, and on whom I could call to pray for me; no one to whom I could state how much *I* was to be pitied because my cousins were handsomer than myself, or because Henry Selwyn loved his little adopted sister better than me, whom he could deem but an acquaintance of a day. Not that in a correspondence, real instead of ideal, I should have stated my case in a manner thus plain and straight-forward; for heroines such as I then was have a natural dislike to plain and simple statements of matters of fact.

"This habit of self-delusion cannot be wondered at in persons who are in an unchanged and unregenerate state: but it is deeply to be lamented, that there should be so much want of Christian simplicity in professing characters, so much looking away from God, and so much criminal self-solicitude.—But to proceed with my story.

"Having no bosom friend, no Delia or Araminta, to whom I dared to open my heart either by conversation or by letter, I was fain to content myself with writing a journal; of which I could give my reader many curious specimens, did not the mixture that it contains of sentiments apparently religious, and of feelings so selfish, render it difficult to select a single genuine passage which might not appear profane.

"Henry Selwyn had not left us longer than a week, and we were looking forward to his coming back, when a letter arrived from him to Lucy, stating that he had found his relative in such a condition, that he feared that he should not be able to return so soon as he had expected.

"Immediately after the receipt of this letter, we were one night suddenly alarmed, about midnight, by violent shrieks, which proceeded from our grandmother's room. I awoke, as well as the rest of the family, in excessive terror, and, dressing myself in haste, flew to the chamber, and found that the shrieks had been uttered by the maid, who slept in a closet within the room, and who had been awakened, as well as Lucy, by a heavy noise

on the floor. They had instantly both jumped up, and found the old lady lying by the grate, apparently lifeless; and as, in falling, she had come in contact with the bars, her clothes were on fire, and she was considerably burnt.

"By the time I entered the room, the flaming night-clothes had been put out, and the old lady was lifted into bed, where she was gasping between life and death; while Lucy, as pale as ashes, and looking like death itself, was supporting her pillow, being herself upon the bed.

"How to account for this accident, we knew not: as the old lady had never before been known to get out of bed during her illness without assistance; but we afterwards had reason to conclude that the occasion of her fall was a third stroke.

"There was a medical man in the village, who arrived in a few minutes, and who employed such means as relieved the old lady as far as she could be relieved. But she never afterwards appeared to be thoroughly sensible, and in fact never noticed any one but Lucy.

"A considerable space of time, however, elapsed before all that was to be done for my grandmother by the surgeon was accomplished: during which time Lucy, as I have already described her, sat supporting her on the bed, being lightly attired, and without a cap, her head-dress having fallen off in her efforts to raise her grandmother from the hearth. Her lovely figure is still present before my mind, as she gazed earnestly on the face of the surgeon when he was examining the burns: her brown hair hanging in natural ringlets about her neck, and her dimpled features still retaining that sweet infantine expression which even sorrow could not destroy.

"During this period, the window was kept open, in order to assist the laboured breathing of the old lady: and I remember seeing the flame of the candle flaring in the night air, and the ringlets gently agitated on Lucy's neck. All the servants were, however, engaged in different ways waiting on the surgeon. Every one was busily occupied but Selina and myself: what Selina was doing, I do not remember; I recollect, however, hearing her exclamations, and frequent cries of 'Well! I am sure I had no idea of all this; how strange! who could have thought of it! bless me, what could the old lady have been doing? dear me! I am glad that I was not the first

to find her!' I can well remember, too, what was passing in *my* mind at that awful period: and I have since, from the recollection of that and other equally trying circumstances of my life, been more impressed with a sense of the dreadful depravity of my nature, than from the review of all other periods of my existence.

"Instead of my being hurried away from selfish feelings by the horrors of the scene, I can recollect, that, after the very first shock was over, all my attention was, as it were, centred in self. I envied Lucy's picturesque appearance at the pillow of her grandmother; I envied her lovely look, her apparent entire forgetfulness of self, the charming expression of her countenance, and the unstudied grace of the drapery with which her childlike limbs were in part shaded. From her my thoughts wandered to the idea of Henry Selwyn: and presently I became so absorbed in a flow of selfish feelings, that I was in fact the last person in the room to remark, that the least danger to any one present could be apprehended from exposure to the night air.

"The surgeon was the first person who was aware of this danger, and he therefore ordered that the windows should be shut, and that precautions should be taken to prevent colds. He also observed Lucy's paleness, felt her pulse, bled her, and insisted on her immediately going to bed.

"The next morning, however, when he visited the family, he was alarmed at her appearance, expressed a dread that she was more seriously injured by the alarm, and the exertions which she had made, than he first apprehended, and hinted, that he believed a few weeks would decide the fate of my grandmother.

"It now certainly behooved me, with this accumulation of afflictions, to fancy myself unhappy, though I certainly was not so; because I can well recollect many circumstances and passing thoughts, which prove, upon reflection, that my mind was then quite as easy as it had ever been during the most happy periods of my life. I remember considering what mourning I should be obliged to wear in case of my grandmother's death, and thinking, with some regret, that I should not look so well in sable as my cousins, for my complexion was not so fair, and my hair was much darker. Nevertheless, though I

had leisure for this and many other reflections of the same tendency, I thought that I could not, of course, with propriety, do otherwise than seem very sad whenever the surgeon and physician made their appearance; and indeed I appeared to be so much affected when informed that they considered Lucy very ill, that they, on departing, sent Mrs. Stephens to us, who from that time was our constant visiter, and who served very much to keep up our spirits, by that parading and bustling manner for which she was far famed, and which she could exercise to equal advantage in regulating the ceremonies of a wedding and the solemnities of a funeral.

"But inasmuch as the histories of egotism are tales which have no end, I shall endeavour to put a constraint upon my strong natural propensity to speak of self, and will endeavour to proceed in my tale with accelerated speed.

"I could fill volumes with narrating the events only of the few days which immediately followed the accident of my grandmother, related above. But I shall pass over this period, so bitter on reflection, as hastily as possible. Suffice it to say, that our lovely Lucy, from that awful night, never more looked up. Towards the evening of the next day, she was taken with a vomiting of blood, owing to the breaking of a blood-vessel; and, almost before we her giddy relations had begun to apprehend her danger, this inestimable young creature expired in the arms of Mrs. Stephens.

"She died, as she had lived, perfectly serene and happy; seemingly without a doubt or a fear lest she should not find perfect peace in the bosom of her Saviour: and, after her death, her beautiful remains presented an image of sleep, so lovely, so tranquil, so unchanged from what she had been in life, that, while I looked upon her, *self itself* seemed for a moment to die within me; and, for the first time in my life, I was blessed by the experience of one comparatively pure and genuine feeling.

"This state of mind, however, did not long continue, as I shall have reason to point out in the sequel. Nevertheless, I cannot but believe that my first feelings on the occasion of the loss of Lucy were those of genuine sorrow.

"It was no small aggravation of the grief of those individuals of the family who had any feeling, to hear the calls of the poor old lady for her child, her Lucy.

"After her third fit, and sad accident, my grandmother, as I before said, never recovered her senses, and she seemed totally to have forgotten every one but Lucy. But this beloved name was ever on her lips: and she appeared to be fully aware of her absence, and lamented it in a manner the most distressing that can be imagined. 'Lucy, my beloved,' she used to say, 'where are you? Lucy, come back to me! child of my heart, whither art thou gone?' And then the poor old lady would burst into tears, and weep till confusion and forgetfulness came to her relief.

"At this time, a second letter was received from Henry Selwyn, full of expressions of the utmost tenderness to Lucy, and containing the information that his relative was better, and that he was about to commence a little tour with him for the establishment of his strength. The letter, however, concluded with an expression of the hope that he should return in a very few weeks, and see his Lucy blooming again like the Rose of Sharon.

"This letter arrived on the day following that of the death of the sweet little girl. And shall I confess, that this was the first circumstance, after that event, that awakened my selfish feelings?

"The letter contained not even a remembrance to me; not the slightest mention of my name; proving, too plainly, that the giddy and boyish writer had not a thought respecting me when I was out of his sight. Such were my mortified feelings on this occasion, that I can well remember thus apostrophizing the remains of my cousin: 'O, happy Lucy! What can be more blessed than a course like yours? How loved were you during your short life! and who can say how regretted in death?' Here, bursting into tears, I experienced the full force of that envious spirit which almost grudges a peaceful and honourable grave to its hated object.

"I shewed the letter to Mrs. Stephens, who evinced far more tender feelings on reading it than I had done, and insisted on laying it upon the bosom of her for whom it had been intended; at the same time cutting off a ringlet from the head of the fair corpse to present

to him whose regard for her had been evinced, as I then found, from his earliest youth.

"Mrs. Stephens wrote instantly to Henry, to inform him of the sad event, and to urge his immediate return, in order that he might once more behold his Lucy before she was consigned to the cold earth.

"My cousin's father was, as I before said, on the Continent, and could not possibly return in time for the funeral. It was therefore settled that Mrs. Stephens should take upon her the management of every thing; and the good lady was, I believe, not sorry to find some employment by which she might partly get rid of that heaviness of heart by which, to do her justice, she had appeared to be oppressed ever since she had ceased to hope for the life of the beloved Lucy—beloved, indeed, by all whose minds were not poisoned by envy.

"In consequence of her being thus empowered to act, Mrs. Stephens failed not presently to excite such a bustle of preparation in the house, as would have suited a much gayer occasion. Every room was speedily filled with milliners, dress-makers, and venders of sables of all kinds. She summoned her daughters for consultation; she arranged and re-arranged plans for the ceremony; and at length she determined that Lucy's remains should be followed to the grave by a number of young ladies, arrayed in white, and clothed with hoods of the same. She determined, also, to make the funeral as public as possible; and therefore invited many of the neighbouring gentlemen. She also required (that which need not have been asked) the attendance of all the poor people whom Lucy had loved; and she also sent for the little orphan whom Lucy had put to school, with the intention of having her carried in the procession.

"It may be asked, what effect all this bustle had on my mind, and on that of Selina. With respect to Selina, she wept a little once or twice during the first few days of our loss; but afterwards she settled into a kind of fixed demureness, her mouth being drawn up, her eyelids dropped, and her motions particularly slow and solemn, by which she appeared to be quite as unhappy as was necessary to those who were not very acute observers, but by which she never succeeded in deceiving me, who was more constantly with her, as appeared

from a conversation that we fell into on a certain occasion, which I, however, have forgotten. This conversation began in the following manner:—‘Hoods,’ said Selina, ‘bless me, what frights we shall look in hoods!’

“‘Frights,’ I replied, ‘why?’ —

“‘All the gentlemen of the neighbourhood are to be present too: I shall be ashamed to look about me.’

“‘Look about you!’ I said, ‘you must not look about you.’

“‘O,’ replied she, ‘O, because of being unhappy: I must look down; yes, I know. But that won’t hinder people from looking at me.’

“‘How provoking it is,’ I thought, ‘that this girl should make all these foolish speeches, and, as it were, thus embody the very ideas which I have been indulging ever since the funeral-procession has been talked of!’ I answered, however, though I was angry, ‘Who will be thinking of you, Selina, on such an occasion as this?’

“‘O, I don’t know,’ she answered; ‘every body. You and I shall be first, you know; and people must see us.’

“‘Ah!’ said I, (and I burst into tears,) ‘if either you or I had died, and it had been Lucy who was to walk at our funeral, such thoughts as those which you have now expressed would never have entered into her head;’ and then renewing my tears with an emotion of real, not affected feeling, I exclaimed, ‘O, Lucy! Lucy! you were too good for us! you were not fit for such company as ours! No, no; you are gone to those to whom you really belonged!’

“A tear started in Selina’s eye, and she said, ‘Come, Caroline, don’t cry: Lucy is happy; and then, you know, we shall be the gainers.’

“‘The gainers!’ I said: ‘what do you mean?’

“‘O,’ she answered, ‘I mean with respect to money. You know, when one’s in grief, one ought to think of every thing that may afford comfort.’

“‘A person,’ I replied, ‘cannot be in very intense grief, who can think of such things as that.’

“‘La! and why not?’ she answered.

“‘Because grief,’ I said, ‘is an absorbing passion; and, when sincere, it occupies every faculty.’

“‘But I am sure,’ replied she, ‘I am truly sorry for

my dear little sister, and would give all that I have in the world to restore her to life. But it cannot be, you know: and what's the use of fretting?"

"So saying, she walked into the next room, where the dress-makers were engaged, and thus she left me to this sad reflection—that there was but little difference between myself and Selina; that we both thought and felt the same, but that she had not sense to conceal her views, while I well understood the necessity of dissembling: and, at that moment, what would I not have given for a better and purer state of feeling! I was ready, with St. Paul, to cry out, *For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.* (Rom. vii. 18, 19.) These good and humbling thoughts, however, soon left me, and I again became the prey of vanity and selfishness.

"In proportion as the day for Lucy's funeral drew nearer, the ferment in the house became greater. I have seen things of this kind managed since, but I never could thoroughly understand how Mrs. Stephens contrived to excite the bustle which she did on this occasion. It was, however, her way; and I have often thought, that she had recourse to such means, to deaden her sensibilities. We deferred the closing of the coffin to the last moment, in hopes that Henry Selwyn would arrive in time to take a last sad farewell of his beloved Lucy. But it was not to be: he who had beheld her in the verdure and bloom of her beauty, was not to see her in her faded and withered state. The impression that was to remain, was to be left in all possible perfection. No very great change, however, had taken place in her appearance, when I looked at her for the last time, excepting that her whole countenance had then assumed an air of sadness, which it had not before presented until within the last twelve hours—a sadness which foreran that total dissolution of her earthly frame that was speedily to take place, and which formed a very melancholy contrast with the charming serenity which, while she was alive, had beamed over her lovely countenance.

"The morning of the funeral arrived; and, to my

utter amazement, from the dawn of day, the house was surrounded by multitudes of poor people, old and young, decently dressed, and shewing every symptom of sincere sorrow. The house, also, was soon filled with persons of higher rank, all anxious to shew their respect to the memory of this lovely young creature.

"I was much affected by the report of what was said in favour of Lucy, and by the tears that were shed on her account; neither did self seem again to take possession of me, till I was dressed in my funeral garments, and perceived that I presented a figure at once graceful and interesting. And I can now well remember, that, when informed that the moment was arrived at which the funeral procession was to commence, I gave one last look at myself in a large mirror, and then descended into the dining-room, where, having taken the arm of my cousin Selina, I took my place in the procession, and advanced through an avenue of people, who opened a way on the right and left to admit us to pass onward to the church, which was not half a quarter of a mile from the house.

"I can recollect, however, but little of this scene. My confusion, awe, and agitation being increased by the heterogeneous feelings of vanity, and the strange idea which I was continually indulging, that every one was looking at me, and that many were admiring me.

"The service, however, was nearly concluded, and the moment at hand when all that remained on earth of the flower and pride of our family was to be lowered down into the vault within the church, in which our grandfather was buried, when suddenly some kind of disturbance seemed to arise among the crowd, in the porch at the further end of the church, and the throng immediately opened to the right and left, to allow some one to pass. The minister made a pause; and all eyes were turned in that direction from which the sound proceeded. I looked up, and saw Henry Selwyn! He was dressed as for a journey, yet without his hat; his hair was disordered, his face flushed as if violently heated, and he came forward with a determination evident in his countenance, which seemed to say, 'I will approach; no one has a right to prevent me.' He came close up to the bier, and, as he passed, brushed so near me, that I

was obliged to give way. When he had reached the coffin, he stood still, and looked for a moment earnestly upon it, and then, with a motion as unexpected as his appearance had been a minute before, he stooped, as I thought, to kiss the name engraved upon the lid; and while so doing, he fell quite senseless upon the chest which contained the mortal remains of his Lucy.

"What immediately followed, I cannot say, nor how I conducted myself on this occasion; for I remember nothing more than confused and hurried scenes of woe succeeding each other, till I found myself in a cottage near the church, occupied by a person who had been an old servant of the family, and where were assembled also several of the young ladies who had attended the funeral, together with Mrs. Stephens, Henry Selwyn, and the surgeon. In the midst of this group, I remember observing the little orphan that had been Lucy's protégée: this poor little baby was dressed in black, and, being in the arms of the woman of the house, it was sensible of no inconvenience, and knew no sorrow.

"It appeared that Henry had been for some time insensible; but, having been bled, he was then recovering, though his countenance still expressed a degree of grief and horror which seemed to forbid all approach to him, and all attempts to yield him comfort. He, at length, however, recollect ed us all, bowed to us separately, and, rising hastily, kissed the infant in the arms of the poor woman, said something about its never wanting a friend, and walked out of the house, followed by the surgeon. A few minutes afterwards, we saw him riding by the church-yard rails; and the surgeon returned to the cottage, bearing Mr. Selwyn's compliments to all present, and apologizing for his so hastily leaving a place with which he found so many bitter recollections associated.

"It was with the greatest difficulty that I heard these messages with composure: it was terrible to me, thus, at this moment, to be made sensible of the defeat of those hopes which I had fondly cherished, that I should soon be able to console Henry for the loss of his Lucy. But here was, at once, such a death-blow to all my hopes of this kind, as I was not prepared to receive; and it was, in consequence, exceedingly difficult for me to conceal my anguish. I did, however, succeed, and I contrived

to make all about me believe that every tear that I shed was for Lucy, and for Lucy only.

“Events now followed each other with a bewildering rapidity. My grandmother’s death succeeded her beloved Lucy’s within a fortnight. Immediately after which, Selina’s father arrived, and took her to London, where, being now in possession of a large fortune, she was soon married. About the same time, I heard of the death of my own father, by which circumstance I now found myself without a home; and as I did not choose to accept my uncle’s proposal of taking me to Town with his daughter, I therefore followed the advice of Mrs. Stephens, and went to reside with two elderly and respectable ladies living near Reading.

“And now, my gentle reader, before I enter upon this which I may denominate the third stage of my life, I think it right to pause, and give you some account of the state of my mind, as far as I understand it, after the various severe and complicated distresses which I have described.

“I can readily feel, and acknowledge, that it was not a right state. When first I came to my grandmother’s, I might truly have been said to have no religion—perhaps a few notions in my head, but no grace in my heart. My grandmother’s conversation, during the short time that I enjoyed it, together with the lovely example of Lucy, had, however, tended greatly to enlarge my ideas on this subject, and, with the divine blessing, to open my mind a little to the view of my own natural depravity. But this knowledge was still very incomplete, and I was altogether in darkness (even after my afflictions) on the subject of that glorious work which the Saviour had performed for man, and on man’s utter inability, apart from divine influence, to do any thing for himself. I was, in consequence, still strong in the idea of my own self-sufficiency, and I was destitute of humility: I could not bear to see any one either preferred before me, or in the enjoyment of any privilege which I did not myself possess.

“The horrors which I had witnessed, and the great mortality that I had seen in my own family, had, however, considerably alarmed me, by bringing death so nearly and repeatedly before me; and, like one who is

in dread of a halter, I began to think it was time for me to set about something in earnest, in order to secure to myself the favour of Heaven.

"These were the views and feelings that I entertained when I arrived at my new abode, of which I am now about to give the description.

"Branching off from the highroad, at some little distance from the town of Reading, on the Wiltshire side, is a lane fenced on each side by a quick hedge, always kept neatly trimmed. This lane is so little frequented by any but foot passengers, that it is as green and soft under the feet as the most verdant lawn. At the distance of nearly half a mile from the main road, this lane opens into a small common, where are a few thatched cottages, with their gardens of pinks and tulips, a small pool or pond in which geese delight to dabble, and a few black-nosed sheep which share the common with the geese.

"Just in that part of the lane where it almost imperceptibly begins gradually to diverge, till it forms part of the common, stood the neat, well-built brick house occupied by the two Misses Grimshaw, my land-ladies.

"These ladies were sisters, had always lived single, possessed the house in which they resided, and also some money; but yet they were not above adding a little to their incomes, by receiving into their family a young lady of respectable name and fortune, and devoting to her their two best rooms.

"I have before told you, that I have always had an inclination to fancy groups and figures for pictures: why should I not, therefore, give you a sketch of my new abode? It was a high house, built principally of brick, and decorated with ornaments of stone. In the centre of the front was the hall door; and on each side there was a parlour, with Venetian windows. In the front was a straight walk, together with several stiff parterres; and on one side, running parallel with the lane, was a long inclosure of a garden, through the centre of which there ran a green walk, terminated by an arbour.

"To this scene I was introduced by Mrs. Stephens: and as my spirits were much depressed when I came into this family, I found the quiet attentions of the old ladies

very consolatory to me, and their continual old-fashioned tittle tattle was not altogether unentertaining.

"These good old ladies were what I conclude more common characters fifty years ago than they are now. They entertained numerous old-fashioned ideas of propriety and impropriety, for which they could give no other reason whatever, than that some things were proper because they were proper, and that other things were neither to be done nor thought of because they were improper. And if I attempted to argue with them about any of these prohibited points, which I sometimes did from mere caprice, the elder sister in one key, and the younger in another, would generally take upon themselves to bring me to reason with arguments much to this effect: 'Why, my dear, such a thing never was heard of; it stands to reason; it could not be; we are astonished how a young lady of your fortune and condition should ever think of such a thing.'

"Now, inasmuch as these good ladies could give no better account of the hope that was in them, (for they seemed very pious as far as they knew,) than for their having a tansy pudding at Easter, or for leaving off their flannel caps on the night of Good Friday, it is not to be supposed that I acquired much knowledge of divine things from them. I was not, however, unhappy with them; and, perhaps, the retired and inglorious situation which I occupied in this family might have been judged particularly suited, humanly speaking, to repress the envious and selfish feelings of my mind. But it did not, however, in this respect, prove so useful to me as might have been expected: for, as I was known to have a large fortune, as I was fashionable, and perhaps rather pleasing in my appearance, the old ladies became, in some degree, proud of having me for their inmate, and I was, in consequence, not a little praised and fondled by them; so that if I had but a finger-ache, I was put to bed, and treated with panada and treacle posset.

"During the first six months of my residence with the Misses Grimshaw, I cultivated no acquaintance abroad, it being in the winter season, and my mind being also much depressed at the strange turn which had taken place in the affairs of my own family; but at the end of that period I began to indulge a close attachment to a

Miss Letitia Arkwright, a young lady who came sometimes from Reading to visit my landladies.

"This young person possessed nothing which could give umbrage to my envious spirit; none of the composure, simplicity, or angelic softness of the lovely Lucy, nor even the delicate beauty of Selina: on the contrary, her features were ordinary, her complexion was sallow, and her person coarse. But she was agreeable in conversation, insinuating and persuasive in her manners, and a high professor of religion. She was, in fact, the first person with whom I had ever associated who understood the common modes of speech and the ordinary topics of conversation generally current throughout the modern religious circles.

"This young lady had associated with some of the characters the most eminent for piety in Reading and London; she was conversant with the names and also with the various gifts and endowments of the several principal preachers in England; she could define, with the nicest accuracy, the most minute differences of opinion between every sect and denomination of Christians in the British islands; she spoke familiarly of the conversion of her neighbours, and she pronounced without hesitation on the spiritual state of every person with whom she was acquainted. She used a vast variety of phrases, which at first seemed quaint to me, but with which I gradually became familiar, and which she always employed when speaking on religious subjects, and she appeared to think very little of the piety of those who did not use precisely the same modes of speaking as herself. She was represented by many in Reading as a pattern of activity in doing good, she was said to have a peculiar facility in talking to the poor relative to the state of their souls; and it was, moreover, hinted concerning her, that she had converted many persons from the error of their ways.

"Such was Miss Letitia Arkwright, the lady whom I chose for my intimate friend, and through whose means it was generally supposed that I, also, had become converted.

"The good old ladies with whom I resided had a very high opinion of this Miss Arkwright, who was a distant relation of theirs; and they, in consequence, encouraged

our intimacy, and took pleasure in seeing it grow, although they did not entirely agree with their cousin in all her views and feelings with respect to religion: for, as I have already stated, these good ladies shrunk with horror from the fancied contagion of any innovations, and they would, in consequence, had they been born at Ephesus in the time of the apostles, have continued to worship the goddess Diana, even in spite of St. Paul and Barnabas themselves.

"But, be this as it may, these good ladies readily encouraged our intimacy, and moreover allowed their foot-boy, who went every day to Reading, to carry our notes backwards and forwards: for, when Miss Arkwright had, as she persuaded herself, converted me to her own way of thinking in reference to religious matters, or, as I might more properly say, when she had taught me to use her language, she proceeded to perfect her work by a constant interchange of billets, in which she communicated to me all her feelings and trials, and encouraged me, in return, to disclose all mine to her.

"Where religion is of the right sort, it invariably produces two effects: the one is humility; and the other, composure, or peace of mind. It is said in Scripture, that the wicked are like the troubled sea, which continually casts up mire and dirt, being incapable of rest. Accordingly, when the work of true conversion has taken place, a peculiar peace is diffused throughout the soul; and activity itself becomes a firm and unruffled quality of the mind, being divested of that restlessness with which it is always accompanied when it characterizes an unregenerate individual. But the change which I had undergone by my associating with Miss Arkwright, was so far from rendering me more humble and more composed, that, day after day, in proportion as I lost the impression of my late sorrows, I grew more and more restless, and increasingly anxious to become an object of some importance in the estimation of my fellow-creatures.

"I had no one to introduce me into the fashionable world, and I felt, in fact, some kind of superstitious dread of earthly gaieties; but I was, nevertheless, as anxious to shew myself off in the front row of a public chapel, or in a Sunday-school procession, as any young beauty had ever been to display herself at a birth-night ball.

" Such being my feelings, it will not be wondered at, if I inform the reader of these pages, that, before my friendship with my amiable Letitia was three months old, I joined her in all her excursions, I accompanied her from chapel to chapel in quest of new preachers, I ran with her from one sick chamber to another, I *chaproned* her Sunday-school children in and out of church, I helped her to plait straw for their bonnets, and to teach her pupils to sing in tune. I also assisted in stoning raisins for Christmas puddings to regale the children, together with sundry other matters of the same consequence, in which I not only rendered some service to the rising generation, but also obtained for myself many pretty compliments, and gratified my love of the picturesque: for I could not doubt that my elegant person, grouped with the surrounding unmeaning figures of the infant poor, whether observed, in the Sunday-school, by the young minister, or, in the gallery of the chapel, by the whole congregation, afforded an object both lovely in itself, and highly interesting in the abstract, as it presented a proof of the power of religion in enabling youth and beauty to triumph over the world, and trample its vanities beneath their feet.

" In the midst of these illusions, it certainly did occur to me to ask myself, once or twice, whether I and my friend were really doing any great good with all this parade and bustle; and I could not help considering whether all this running from house to house, this collecting of children merely to dress and undress them, and parade them through the streets, could be counted, after all, much better than mere eye-service. But these gleams of clear light were few and very transient, and they seldom had power to disperse, for more than a moment at a time, the deep shades of selfishness which clouded and darkened my whole soul.

" On subsequent reflection, I have thought that it sometimes pleases the Almighty to make use of instruments, in themselves worthless, for the advancement of his kingdom, in the same manner as he employed the ravens in feeding the prophet in the wilderness; and those who are really anxious for the glory of God, are ready, with St. Paul, to rejoice that Christ is preached, whether it be of strife or otherwise. But the question

here is this—whether, in such parading scenes as those that we have just noticed, there is aught of Christ to be found, and whether they do not too often tend to retard rather than to advance the cause of genuine religion.—But to proceed.

“ I know not what the more reflecting portion of the good people of Reading might have thought of me during the few years that I was with them ; but of this I am assured, that, among a certain set, my praises ran high, and I was held forth as a pattern of all that was good by many excellent parents, who, at the same time, could they have had their wishes, and have seen their daughters like me, would perhaps have wished ten times more earnestly again to see them what they were before.

“ Several years thus passed away, during which time I became a kind of idol among a certain circle of old women, and well-meaning but ignorant persons, in the middle classes, who constituted the greater part of our religious society ; and, from my constantly hearing religious matters discussed, and my attending the ministry of various preachers, some good, some indifferent, but all expressing themselves in the same style of language, and using similar phrases, I insensibly acquired a good deal of head-knowledge of a certain kind : neither did I want the art of displaying this knowledge with some skill, and with no small credit to myself, among my own set. But, as is common to those who associate only with one description of persons, and who have not the opportunity of seeing and conversing with others, I became very dogmatical, and deemed every one as reprobate who did not employ precisely our own peculiar modes of speech, and embrace our opinions, on the minor as well as on the essential points of religion.

“ Having thus described my state of mind, I leave it to any reader acquainted with Christian experience to judge whether I grew in grace while residing with my good friends the Misses Grimshaw, or whether I was not, upon the whole, in a worse state, after I had been with them some time, than when I first came to their house. As I, however, before said, I procured to myself a very good name, which, after a while, stood me in stead, in the manner which I shall explain.

“ I had been in England about six years, more than

four of which I had spent in the neighbourhood of Reading, when, one day, as I was walking along one of the least frequented streets of that town, I saw a gentleman at a distance whose appearance struck me so much, that I trembled from head to foot. He approached, and I found that I was not mistaken in my first surmise. This person was no other than Henry Selwyn, dressed in a clerical habit, and but little altered from what I had once known him, excepting that he had become taller, and that somewhat of an air of seriousness, if not of sorrow, appeared to characterize his entire person and demeanour. He had, as I afterwards found, just been inducted into a large living in one of the western counties of England, and he was then come to Reading to settle some business which could not be transacted in his absence.

"It seems, that he had imagined I was returned to the West Indies, as he had not heard of my father's death; and he was quite as much surprised to see me, as I was delighted to meet with him.

"I might now fill a volume with pourtraying the immediate effects of this meeting, and in giving a description of the various scenes which followed it; but egotism the most barefaced would shrink from a task like this. The remembrance of past happiness is always bitter, but there are some circumstances on the recollection of which it is agony to dwell. Amidst all my vanity and selfishness, I was really attached to Henry Selwyn, and I cannot remember the time when I ever sincerely regarded another of his sex. My reader will not, therefore, wonder to find me confess, that, after many meetings with Henry in Misses Grimshaw's parlour, after having spent many hours in hearing him talk of Lucy, I was by no means sorry to discover symptoms of a transfer of his affections from her from whom he was separated by death to one who still lived, and who possibly might reconcile him to life.

"But, to make my story short, after a suitable time employed in courtship, we were married. I handsomely took leave of the good old ladies my hostesses; and, taking Letitia, who had been my bridesmaid, with me, we proceeded with my dear husband to the home that was in waiting for us.

"We travelled slowly, and arrived, on the evening of the second day, at a spacious and venerable-looking parsonage-house, situated in the centre of a considerable market-town, where my husband would have been regarded as a sort of bishop, had there not been, unfortunately, another parish in the town, and, consequently, another rector, another rectory, and another church. At that time, however, I was too happy, far too happy, to think of matters of this kind, although afterwards they proved a source of great trouble to me. Indeed, I had then of late been so forced out of my ordinary mode of speaking and thinking by the strong influence of other feelings, that I had forgotten, for a time, all the religion, whether real or pretended, which, as it were, belonged to myself, and I had no other thought beyond my desire to speak and act just as my Henry wished. In this state I must, therefore, have appeared to him quite different from what I really was; and that not so much from my having any plan to deceive him, as from the strength of my regard for him, which absorbed, for the time, all other considerations, and left me no higher gratification than that of making myself agreeable to the object of my attachment.

"Thus the harshness and selfishness of my nature, my vanity, my love of display, my natural coldness and deadness of heart, my pride and ambition, were for a time concealed from him whom it most behooved to know them.

"At the close of the second day after our marriage, we reached our habitation, which was a noble old parsonage-house, standing in a garden, and opening towards the street. The garden at the back of the house was beautifully adorned with forest trees, and laid out in parterres of flowers, in such a manner, that, although in the centre of a large town, we beheld immediately around us nothing but what was elegant and agreeable, and we were regaled with the chirpings of the linnet and the robin, while our near neighbours heard nothing but the din and buzz of the crowded city. Besides two large and handsome sitting-rooms, the parsonage-house contained a good study, with a bow-window, which opened towards the most lovely, retired, and well-arranged part of the garden.

"After having shewn me the other parts of the house, which were all, in their way, complete and admirable, my beloved husband led me into his study; and there, placing me upon a sofa near the open window, (for it was summer-time,) 'My beloved Caroline,' he said, 'this is my *sanctum sanctorum*: I admit no company here; but to you it is at all times accessible.'

"We then entered into conversation; and Mr. Selwyn disclosed to me at that time many of those private feelings respecting his views of religion and the state of his own heart, which proved how deeply he was interested in the cause of his God.

"We had continued for some time conversing in this happy way, waiting the summons to a late dinner which we had ordered on our arrival, when Mr. Selwyn was called out on some business, and I arose, at the same time, to examine the books which were ranged in large cases around the room, when I perceived, hanging on one side of a bookcase, and in a remarkably good light, a small painting set in a deep black frame. I approached it, little suspecting, however, what it was, and found, with astonishment, that it presented a most exact representation of Lucy, at full length, though of a very small size. The little figure was dressed in a white frock, such as Lucy had commonly worn; while her fair hair appeared hanging in charming ringlets round her face, and upon her polished neck. A beautiful landscape, rich with woods and waterfalls, filled up the back-ground of the scene; and in the front, at the feet of the little figure, lay a beautiful fawn, whose meek and tender eyes were raised up to its gentle companion, only more lovely and interesting than itself.

"My first emotions, on seeing this representation of her who was the prototype, in my mind, of all that was admirable in her sex, and whose early death had, as it were, impressed an indelible seal upon her excellencies, was a burst of tears, unaffected, sincere, and affectionate tears. But self was not thus to be put off: this discovery of Lucy's picture in the *sanctum sanctorum* of my husband was not so easily to be passed by; it was not natural to me habitually thus to feel for others, without reference to myself; this had never been my practice; and now was not the time when it was probable I should

begin so to do, just in the acme of my bridal glory—at the moment of my finding myself at the summit of my wishes. Prosperity is not favourable to the improvement of a selfish character: not that I mean to say, that adversity can effectually amend it; on the contrary, distress frequently has a tendency to harden it. No; there is nothing short of divine power which can soften the heart of stone into the relentings of a heart of flesh.—But to proceed.

“ My first emotion, as I before said, on seeing my late lovely cousin’s picture in my husband’s study, was of an amiable and salutary character; but other thoughts speedily arose in my mind. ‘ And is it thus,’ I said to myself, ‘ that he who pretends to be entirely devoted to me, reserves in his heart an idol, to which his secret devotions are paid? O Lucy! ’ I added, aloud, ‘ happy, happy Lucy! most happy in thy grave: O that I could change places with thee! that I could lay my head on thy cold pillow! ’

“ Envious and jealous feelings are, as I have before remarked, very shy of obtruding themselves. Even when compelled by their own strength to come forward, they will choose any name but their own, and they will attempt to impose themselves under any other appearance than that which is natural to them.

“ This being the case, I was anxious to conceal every emotion of jealousy from my husband. I accordingly hastened from the study, and did not appear before him again till sunshine was restored to my countenance.

“ Notwithstanding this circumstance of which I have spoken, nothing occurred to interrupt our peace during the first few months of our marriage. Few men, perhaps, were ever more formed to contribute to the happiness of a wife than was the man who had fallen to my lot. He was pious, humble, tender, cheerful, full of information, and he possessed the ability of communicating his sentiments in a manner the most agreeable, perhaps, of any person with whom I ever met. More than this, he was the man of my choice; the only one whom I had ever loved: and could I but have forgotten that I was not the object of his first love, I should not have had a wish ungratified—I fancied, at least, that I should not. But the evil that assailed me was not from

without: no possible combination of circumstances could have made me happy in the state of mind in which I then was; for I was entirely devoted to self; and wholly influenced by the merest selfish feelings. But, as I before remarked, no unpleasant occurrence, during the first few months of our marriage, had any power to disturb our comfort; for my husband was evidently devoted to me, and as I was newly arrived in the town, a bride, and supposed to have a large fortune, much respect was paid me, and self was, in consequence, as highly gratified as it could well desire.

"Several events, however, in the mean time took place, which I shall relate as succinctly as possible. I have already informed my reader, that our town consisted of two parishes; that in the lower part of the town being in the charge of my dear husband, and the other in the higher part being under the care of a certain rich old gentleman, who had but lately become a widower, and without children. The two parish churches were called the high and the low; not so much with a reference to the particular situations of the buildings, as to the characters of their respective rectors; the one being a man of the old school, a great stickler for the honour of the cloth, and the other, which was my beloved husband, one in whom all views of self-exaltation were absorbed by the earnest desire which he cherished of promoting the glory of God.

"But, notwithstanding the very great difference that existed between these two ministers, namely, Mr. Selwyn and Dr. Delaney, when I was introduced into this society, there was a very good understanding subsisting between them, and the doctor seemed very willing to allow the views and doctrines espoused by my husband, on consideration of some little acts of kindness which he was ever ready to perform for him; such as now and then reading prayers for him on a week-day, &c. &c. and sending him his first peas and finest peaches and apricots out of his garden. In return for which, the old gentleman, as I before said, permitted Mr. Selwyn to think for himself on matters of divinity, contenting himself with speaking of him, not only behind his back, but also in his presence, as a good man, but one whose head on some subjects was not altogether sound.

"Dr. Delaney was, however, a man of family, and prided himself on making a good figure in a drawing-room. He, therefore, on my appearance as a bride, immediately came to see me, failing not to pay me every compliment which is thought seasonable on such occasions, and he was indeed so assiduous in his attentions, that it appeared as if he wished that something more than common civility should subsist between us.

"I had always used myself to the habit of indulging in strong likings and aversions, and I had not unfrequently taken a dislike on much slighter grounds than that on which I now did for the doctor: but the old gentleman had scarcely been twice in my company, before I expressed an utter abhorrence of his sentiments to my husband, and asked him what could induce him to bear with the haughty insolence with which he treated his understanding.—'Why, my dear,' I said, 'I see it as plainly as I now see you, that the old gentleman looks on your divinity as not only unsound, but absurd.'

"'Well, my Caroline,' he replied, 'and if it is so, what harm does that do me?'

"'And what good,' I answered, 'is there in allowing yourself to be thus treated?'

"'Much, very much,' he said. 'In the first place, I render my religion amiable and acceptable in the estimation of my brother, and I do all that in me lies to promote the peace of the town; and you will oblige me much, my beloved,' he added, 'if you will henceforth forward this my desire of living in peace with the doctor.'

"I bowed in apparent compliance, although certainly not with the best grace; but it was early days with us yet, and I had not yet ventured to shew my husband that I could assume a cloudy as well as a bright countenance.

"As I did not alter in my manner to the old doctor, he still continued to visit us: and though the oftener I saw him the less I liked him, yet I refrained for some time from mentioning him again to Mr. Selwyn; but I was not so cautious with respect to what I said of him to my bosom friend and bridemaid, who had kindly promised to spend the first six months of our marriage with us.

"Letitia, at first, heard my remarks on the doctor with the same kind of encouraging smiles with which she received all my other communications; but, after a while, I perceived that she hearkened to them with more reserve, and, at length, acknowledged that she thought, if she must speak her mind, that I did not fully understand the old gentleman, and that she believed him to be a very worthy man, though, certainly, rather dark on some points.

"'Dark, Letitia!' I repeated; 'dark as pitch! His is indeed a palpable, an Egyptian darkness!'

"Letitia made me no answer, and I felt both offended and surprised; for this was the first time that my bosom friend had presumed to offer an opinion contrary to that avowed by me. The reason, however, of our present difference was soon explained, for, before the expiration of Letitia's six months, Dr. Delaney solicited and readily obtained the honour of her hand; and I thereby suddenly saw my quondam humble friend exalted to be the first lady in the town, while I was obliged to content myself with the second place. I was, however, fully sensible that the indulgence of uneasy feelings of this kind was so decidedly vulgar, that I would rather have died than avow them. I therefore endeavoured to disguise them with the semblance of satisfaction, and I failed not to say, in every company, 'Well, nothing that ever happened to me has given me more pleasure than this marriage of poor dear Letitia Arkwright's. She will make the old gentleman such a comfortable wife! such a good nurse! Well, I had no idea of her ever doing so well, for the poor girl had no fortune: and though I call her a girl, she is not so young either. I have known her for these six years; and she looked as old, when I first saw her, as she does now.'

"Thus I used to run on about her; not, indeed, in my husband's presence, for I feared his penetration: and, as I have had repeated occasion to remark, such feelings as I then cherished, and as I fear I am not now free from, though I trust they are somewhat subdued by the divine power, are exceedingly shy of discovery, and desirous of disguise.

"In the mean time, while I was going about uttering my congratulatory panegyrics, every thing appeared to

be upon the most friendly footing between me and the new bride. We often met, and she expressed the pleasure that she felt in the consideration that we should not now be compelled to part, but might live and die in one town.

"Fond as I had always fancied myself, and affected to be, of Letitia, it is now very evident to me, that my apparent regard proceeded only from the gratification that I found in the assiduous court that she had paid to me. She had, either unintentionally or through design, found out my weak side, and she attached me to herself by flattering that weakness. But now that she presumed to consider herself as my equal, and to treat me as such, I felt my heart withdrawing itself from her; and I now thought that I perceived, even in her praise, a coarseness which filled me with disgust. But, on my expressing to my Henry these newly awakened feelings of dislike to Letitia, he, to my great amazement, confessed that he had never regarded her in any other light than that in which I then beheld her, and that he had not been without surprise at my having selected such a companion and bosom friend.

"'And why then,' said I, indignantly, 'did you allow me to choose her as my bridesmaid, and to bring her here?'

"'Because,' he added, smiling, 'because, my Caroline, I thought that in the choice of your female friends you had a right to please yourself.'

"'Notwithstanding this sweetness of his manner, I felt almost inclined to quarrel with him for not checking this intimacy, which I now began so sincerely to regret. I, however, now said no more, finding that my complaints only turned against myself.'

"In the mean time, as I had but little encouragement to open my mind to any one on the subject of my dislikes, I kept up appearances with my old friend, and the two rectors' ladies were, no doubt, considered as models of the most perfect and unreserved friendship.

"Still, amidst all my uneasiness, my self-love was, nevertheless, much gratified in possessing such a husband as my Henry. Independent of his excellencies in private life, I had the pleasure of witnessing the admiration which he excited whenever he appeared in public.

His person and countenance were remarkably fine, his voice was deep and melodious, his elocution peculiarly good, and his doctrines were truly evangelical. Hence it cannot be questioned that he never preached without exciting admiration, and that many souls were won by his ministry. The most humble woman might, therefore, have found it difficult not to be proud of such a man; and it will not be questioned that I, who never had been humble, was exceedingly elated at hearing his praises from the congregation as I passed from my pew after the sermon on the Sabbath-day; neither was I a little delighted when I saw by what crowds he was followed, and as I heard, at the same time, of the emptiness of Dr. Delaney's church.

"I can now recollect, with a degree of anguish which I should find it difficult to express, how, during the first few months of my bridal happiness, I used to hasten towards the vestry immediately after service, and return exulting through the congregation, hanging upon the arm of this elegant and accomplished man, proud of my husband, proud of his appearance, proud of his religion, proud of his talents, and proud of his popularity! O, vanity! vanity! how mistaken are those who expect to detect thine influence only amidst scenes of worldly pomp and pleasure! The unregenerate heart finds fuel for self-love in every situation of life, and, I might almost say, in death itself.

"There was, however, a certain something, which for a long time restrained me from acknowledging to my husband the pride that I felt in possessing, as my own, a man so admired. It happened, however, that my vanity was so strongly excited on one occasion, that I could no longer repress the expression of my feelings.

"A certain pious nobleman and his lady were visiting in our neighbourhood, and, on one Sunday, during afternoon service, they drove up, in their coach-and-four, to the church-door, and, proceeding up the aisle, were ushered into the rector's pew, in which I was sitting. My husband preached, as usual, his manner being so wholly unchanged, that I supposed he was not aware of the honour done to him by the presence of the noble strangers. I, however, had my eyes almost immovably fixed upon them, and I read, with delight, the eager in-

terest evidently painted on their countenances. After service, they bowed to me with the utmost politeness; and, perhaps guessing who I was, expressed their highest sense of the gratification that they had received, not only praising the matter, but the manner of the sermon.

"We parted with bows on both sides, and I instantly hastened to join my husband; to whom, as soon as I found ourselves alone, I began to relate all that had passed in the church, and commenced with asking him whether he had seen Lord and Lady D—— walk up the centre aisle.

"He answered calmly in the affirmative.

"'I thought,' said I, 'that you had not seen them.'

"'And why, my love?' was his reply.

"'Because,' I answered, 'you never changed countenance.'

"'Changed countenance!' he reiterated; and such a glow and flush arose in his cheeks as I had never seen in them before, neither could I then understand what had at that time excited it, for he did not speak, but seemed absorbed in meditation.

"Presuming, however, that he was not displeased at what I had said, I proceeded to give him some account of Lord and Lady D——'s remarks on his sermon, and the admiration which they had expressed. But, suddenly interrupting me, 'O my Caroline!' he rejoined, 'my dear Caroline! if you love me, if you desire my spiritual welfare, beware of polluting my mind with the sound of human praise. If there is any one thing for which I have prayed more than for another, it is this—that I might be blessed in my ministry with a single eye, and that I might never be led to seek any glory but that of my crucified Saviour.

"'What, my beloved wife,' he added, tenderly taking my hand, 'what, humanly speaking, has rendered the visible Church a barren wilderness, excepting this spirit of self-love, which has more or less pervaded many of its ministers and teachers, and this spirit of idolatry, which has possessed such numbers of the people? Every man either sets himself up as an idol, or exalts his teacher to the same impious elevation. But I have prayed, I have prayed earnestly, to be kept from this sin: and, if you value my happiness and welfare, Caroline, you will

never more repeat any thing which you may hear of me, be it good, or be it evil; for I consider myself, in my character as a minister, as accountable to my God alone, and by the hope of his approval only do I desire my services to be prompted.'

"So saying, he left me alone, in no very comfortable state of mind; for I both feared that I had offended him, and I was, also, thoroughly mortified by his too evident superiority over myself.

"It was in my husband's study that this conversation had taken place, and, when he left me, I was sitting exactly opposite to the little picture of Lucy which I have before spoken of. While I was deeply engaged in the comparison between Mr. Selwyn's state of mind, as he had described it but a moment previous, and my own, such as I had ever felt it to be, (for I never could remember the time when my exertions were not influenced by the spirit of eye-service,) my attention was suddenly arrested by the sweet portrait of Lucy, as the reflected light of the afternoon sun shed over it a rich glow, by which it appeared in the most striking point of view. The painter had been particularly happy in preserving the holy and gentle expression of the original countenance, and the dovelike eyes of the little figure seemed, at that instant, to be fixed upon me with such an expression of holy harmlessness and entire freedom from passion as we sometimes see in lovely infants when they appear to be looking unconsciously upon the angry contests of the elders of the family.

"Lucy had ever been to me an object of the keenest envy, and that baleful passion again rekindled within me at this moment; insomuch so, that I burst into tears, turned from the picture, and, in a fit of excessive ill-humour, withdrew to my chamber, where, for a long time, I indulged myself in bitter weeping. But, as my husband had been suddenly called from home on some parochial duty, I had leisure to wipe away my tears before his return. For I was then just in the humour to consider myself a heroine; and it is a part of that self-exalted character to weep in secret, and to appear all beautiful resignation in the presence of the fancied tyrant. Thus my afflictions continued to be, for a time, unobserved by my husband, who came in, at a late hour,

somewhat fatigued with the duties of the day, and with his mind full of the distresses of some sick person by whom he had been praying.

"The little cloud in this way blew over; and, during the course of the same week, we were invited to dine at Dr. Delaney's, to meet Lord and Lady D—, who I found were remotely connected with the old doctor.

"Mrs. Delaney evidently considered herself to be indeed in her glory on this occasion, though she made me blush for myself many times, when I remembered that this woman had been my chosen and most intimate associate.

"During dinner, she talked without intermission, addressing Lady D— with the most servile and yet familiar flattery, and treating me as a kind of upper servant; at the same time interlarding all her discourse with a sort of ready-made religious expressions, and a peculiar set of phrases which are in the mouth of all professors of a certain rank in life.

"After dinner, we withdrew to the drawing-room; and then Mrs. Delaney began to open her mind, as she called it, to Lady D—, or, rather, to detail before that lady, who, little as I saw of her, appeared to me a truly pious and elegant woman, the account of her own experience, of the rise of her friendship for me, (a part of her story of which I now began to be ashamed,) of her present happiness with Dr. Delaney, and of her plans for advancing the cause of true religion in the town.

"On this last topic she expatiated very largely, told the lady of all her schemes, and finished by carelessly adding, that she was sure of my co-operation in all that she desired; thus assuming to herself a pre-eminence which I was by no means inclined to yield her: for I had not yet learned to say, with St. Paul, *What then? notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.* (Phil. i. 18.)

"But it may be said, in my behalf, that I did not see aught of Christ in all this parade and talk. Certainly I did not: nevertheless, there can scarcely be any question that benefit is derived to some individuals from every public charity, however ill contrived, however deficient in point of spirituality, however blended with evil; and on this account I ought to have rejoiced in the proposal of

any plan by which the slightest good might be effected.—But to proceed.

“I returned home that evening in a very mortified state, plainly perceiving that I should become a mere cipher in the town, unless I exerted myself in promoting some public work before Mrs. Delaney’s active spirit began to set itself in motion.

“The doctor and his bride had resolved on taking a journey to Bath, and they were to set out on the following Monday, to be absent for some weeks. I waited only, therefore, for their departure, and, when I thus saw the coast clear, I set to work to establish a school of industry in the centre of the town, which was to receive the children of both parishes.

“Mr. Selwyn, as soon as he heard of my plan, gave me the greatest encouragement, and placed a fifty-pound note in my hands for helping forward my purpose. I also met with the most flattering support from many of the ladies in the town and neighbourhood; and, in short, all difficulties were so soon and so easily overcome, that, before my bosom friend returned, I had procured a large room in the situation that I wished, I had assembled nearly two hundred children, and had set them all to spin and knit, and read in the primer, and I had enjoyed the pleasure of seeing them paraded to and from church in a uniform of my own choosing. I had also the satisfaction of receiving many congratulations on the subject, and of hearing myself called a mother in Israel by many well-meaning people, who knew less of me than I did of myself.

“It was on the occasion of the first appearance of the children at church, that I had a very serious and affecting conversation with my husband. It commenced by my expressing myself pleased with what I had done, and asking him if he did not think that the little ones appeared to advantage.

“‘My dear Caroline,’ he answered, ‘so far every thing is right. But I wish you to consider the proper end of all charities of this kind; and to observe, that if the grand object is not habitually kept in view, no divine blessing can ever be expected upon the work.’

“‘There is often much, too much, of self-seeking in all undertakings of this kind; too much of the pharisa-

ical spirit of desiring the praise of men. Hence proceeds much parade, much bustle, much cleansing of the outside of the cup and platter, but at the same time little if any of that simple spirit which induces the Christian teacher constantly to aim at directing the eye of his pupil towards the Saviour.

“ ‘ These establishments, of which we are speaking, my beloved,’ he said, ‘ are only valuable in the proportion in which there is the presence of the Saviour vouchsafed to them; in proportion as faith and holiness, Christian humility, and, in short, as true religion abounds. When these are wanting in the manager, or when the well-meaning directors fail either in diligence or watchfulness, it is a question with me, whether he who collects and associates a number of children together is not injuring rather than benefiting mankind.’ ”

“ It might surely have been expected, that, having such a faithful monitor at home, I should employ every possible exertion to render my services in my school pure and unalloyed by worldly motives. But although I loved and honoured my husband above all human beings, yet my self-love was even greater than my conjugal affection: and, when I was out of his sight, and acting with a view to the observation of others, my vanity wholly overpowered me; in consequence of which, though I visited my school on most days, I consider that I did really nothing when there—that is, nothing that was calculated to promote the spiritual good of the children. It is true, that I hustled from room to room, I changed the plans, scolded the teachers, displayed my own knowledge, gossiped with the other visitors, reproved the children in a language that they could but half comprehend, bestowed rewards on the pertest of them, set the elder ones among them to tyrannize over the younger, caused all of them to sing certain hymns without their understanding the meaning of a single sentiment contained in them, and procured long prayers to be said in the hearing of the little ones, of which they did not understand a syllable; in short, I occasioned a general stir, while I was wholly prevented by my self-love from observing that I was not made the means of bringing any thing to pass which could be deemed in the least degree spiritually good.

"After a while, Mrs. Delaney came home; and (as I was soon told) expressed great anger at my establishment, although she did not decline taking the place which had been reserved for her in our committee.

"And now, from this time I may date the subsequent contest which openly began to discover itself between me and Letitia. It first arose at a meeting of our committee, in which she opposed every thing which I suggested, though under the cloak of friendship, calling me, at the same time, her dear, good friend, her kind Caroline, &c. &c. But, after this period, I observed that these endearing epithets gradually became less and less frequent, as did our visits, till at length we had become declared rivals, and, as is usually the case with rivals when they occupy situations of equal influence, we had each our avowed partisans, and divided the town between us.

"This animosity at first appeared to be unobserved by Mr. Selwyn, who continued his visits to the doctor, adding, also, various other acts of kindness; till at length Mrs. Delaney became so violent against me, that I could no longer conceal from my husband, what I supposed he had never noticed, viz. our little jealousies.

"He smiled when he heard my confession, and calmly said, 'My dear Caroline, when will you rise superior to these things? have you not a husband who loves you above all the world? have you not an ample fortune, and a happy home? and what then signifies what is said of you?'

"He then again took occasion to point out the danger of our inordinately either desiring human approbation, or dreading human censure; adding, 'Let us pray, let us pray without ceasing for that meek and holy spirit, whereby alone we may be enabled to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, and to fulfil the law of love towards our neighbour. O for that spirit of self-denial,' he added, 'which elevates its possessor above the tempestuous skies of this lower world, and enables him to press forward in the path of duty, without deviation, and without pause! Visit your poor people, my Caroline, and lead them to your Saviour. Ever keep the same object in view with regard to your school; and suffer neither the praises nor the censures of your fellow-creatures to reach beyond your ears.'

“ ‘I am, then,’ I said, ‘to bear all the indignities with which my enemies choose to load me? and I am to understand that you refuse to declare yourself displeased with those who injure your wife?’

“ ‘I desire, my dear Caroline,’ replied he, ‘to live in peace; and I wish that you could resolve to do the same.’

“ I was sullen, and acknowledged that I had not been pleased at his continued kindness to Doctor Delaney, when he knew, at the same time, how disrespectfully his wife treated me.

“ He stated to me the importance of his maintaining a friendship with his brother rector for the good of the town.

“ ‘The town!’ I said; ‘and so you love the town better than your wife?’

“ He answered me with warmth, charged me with selfishness, and left me in anger.

“ I was irritated at this charge; and from that time I gradually became less anxious to conceal my ill temper from him: for I never could wholly divest my mind of the idea, that, had Lucy lived, he would not have married me; and the feeling which arose from this thought habitually dwelt upon my mind, and excited increasing irritation within me.

“ I have now brought my history down to the second year of our marriage; at which period I gave birth to a daughter, who promised to possess no small degree of loveliness.

“ It had been my desire that this child should be named after myself; and when she was about a week old, I hinted my wish to my husband; but I was surprised to find that he gave me a slight answer, and turned off the discourse to another subject.

“ It is common for parents to think their own offspring beautiful, let them be ever so plain. But my child was counted lovely by all who saw her, and that almost from the day of her birth. Her features were small, her complexion was exquisitely fair, her eyes were dark blue, and sparkling with intelligence, and her head, before she was half a year old, was adorned with the most abundant ringlets of the richest auburn hair.

“ When this lovely little creature was about six weeks old, the day of her christening was appointed; and my

self-love was not a little wounded, at that time, by a request from Mr. Selwyn, made with some hesitation, that she might be called Lucy. ‘I think, my Caroline,’ said he, with some perturbation of manner, ‘that she will be like our Lucy.’

“‘Do as you please,’ I replied, very coolly, ‘name her what you will.’

“‘You have no objection, then?’ he said, looking earnestly at me.

“‘None at all,’ I answered, endeavouring to suppress my feelings; but adding, at the same time, ‘no one will accuse you of inconstancy. It appears that death itself cannot disunite some characters.’

“‘And why should it?’ he answered, with emotion. ‘Why should death eradicate our love for those with whom we hope to spend a blessed eternity?’

“Mr. Selwyn was at that moment called away, which occurrence was well for me, as, otherwise, I should probably have occasioned one of those scenes with which those who are powerfully actuated by self-love sometimes diversify the ordinary routine of domestic life. As I, however, saw no more of Mr. Selwyn till the hour of the christening arrived, the little girl received the name of Lucy without further question.

“And now, with a husband such as Henry Selwyn, with whose character my reader can now be no stranger, and a child such as Lucy, whose budding excellencies rendered her from day to day increasingly fit to be regarded as *a mother's joy*, it might be concluded that I was one of the happiest of women: and so indeed I was when I calmly sat down to the reasonable consideration of all my blessings; nevertheless, in the midst of all these blessings, I was in a state of constant uneasiness and agitation.

“After some months, I got tired of my school of industry, and allowed it gradually to fall into the hands of hireling teachers, while, however, I still desired to be considered as its manager. Thus I laid aside this toy, and began to play with another, which was the establishment of female clubs, which met every week, and at which we talked, and subscribed, and borrowed and lent books: for I do not distinctly recollect whether any thing else was done, excepting that some took snuff, and others

groaned, whenever funerals or weddings were spoken of. As, at Christmas, however, I regularly gave a very handsome dinner to my old women, and as I provided a tea-drinking for them at Midsummer, I was excessively popular with them, and was therefore greatly offended when I heard that Mrs. Delaney had set up an adult school at her end of the town, and that she not only made her hours correspond with mine, but had actually drawn away some of my partisans. I grew excessively angry on becoming acquainted with this hostile conduct, and I allowed my anger so warmly to betray itself before the members of my club, that all that I said on the occasion was repeated to Mrs. Delaney, whose displeasure was, no doubt, greatly inflamed by the disclosure: in consequence of which, on the next day, her husband came to complain to mine of the manner in which I had spoken of her.

"On this occasion, my husband offended me very greatly; for, giving his hand to Dr. Delaney, he declared his determination of never quarrelling with him, advising him to make up his mind, as he himself had done, to leave their wives to themselves, and assuring him that there could be no question but that much had been added to what I had unguardedly said.

"The old doctor, who was a good-natured man, took Mr. Selwyn's offered hand with much cordiality, and promised him that in future he would leave the ladies to fight their own battles.

"As I was in an adjoining room at the time that this conversation took place, I was violently agitated with shame and displeasure; and when I next met Mr. Selwyn alone, I gave utterance to my anger in a manner which I had never before indulged in his presence.

"He tried to soothe me: but I would not be soothed, telling him, that he had spoken of me, and of my sex in general, with contempt, and that in the presence of a man whom I hated and despised.

"To all this he made but little answer; only telling me, that he had resolved never to espouse my quarrels, and expressing his wish that I would rather confine myself to my hemming, than engage in undertakings abroad which I had not temper to manage: and, thus speaking, he left the room.

"In this way, and by the frequent repetition of such

scenes, and various other proofs of my selfishness, I gradually chilled the affections of this best of husbands, and thus prepared my own punishment.

"In the mean time, as Mr. Selwyn's affection to me evidently became cooler, his love for his little daughter grew increasingly fervent. As months glided away, she became more lovely, and the likeness to her lamented namesake was increasingly striking. *Ah, my baby! ah, my Lucy!* how happy might I not have been when I possessed thee and thy father! Thy beloved father was still spared to me for a while; and still do I behold thee, in fancy's eye, sitting on thy father's knee in his study, where he often retained thee with him for hours, with thy soft and beautiful deep-blue eyes raised towards thy parent's face, and thy sweet small mouth and pouting lip embellished with a thousand dimples. O what a tender friendship subsisted between this father and his infant daughter! Oh, miserable wife and mother that I am, my self-love has indeed met with its deserved punishment!

"I have now, I think, furnished my reader with sufficiently numerous and varied evidences of my selfishness, and I shall, therefore, now proceed to the last topics of my unhappy story which are worth recording.

"A year and half had rolled along since the birth of Lucy, and the little fair one was now able to trot about the garden with her father, and sit by him, and take her meals with him, and she was, therefore, in fact, his constant companion when he was at home. Often have I heard him, on his entering the house from the street or garden, call aloud for his Lucy, when she would answer him, in lisping accents, from her nursery: even when he was studying, she would be contentedly sitting by him on the sofa, or artlessly playing on the carpet at his feet. She was a child of an uncommonly mild and tender disposition, and, when hastily addressed, she would often appear terrified and tremble: her eyes would then fill with tears, and her coral lip would quiver, while a pink and beautiful glow would entirely suffuse her face and neck. But no rough or hasty word was ever spoken to this dear child by her amiable father, and often have I seen her sleeping on his bosom as he sat engaged with his book.

"While this tender friendship was continually growing between the father and daughter, my mind was occupied by other matters. Though my husband would not vindicate me in my dispute with Mrs. Delaney, I was not backward in asserting what I deemed my own rights, and in maintaining, that I considered myself much injured in the affair of the club and the adult school. I told my story; Mrs. Delaney told hers: the old doctor laughed at us both; and my husband appeared never to take any interest whatever in the subject, though he was far from being careless respecting the promotion of my religious undertakings in general.

"At this time, that is, when my daughter Lucy was about a year and a half old, Dr. Delaney was attacked by a slight paralytic, which disabled him from attending to his public duty, in consequence of which, it was necessary for him to have a curate; and on this occasion Mrs. Delaney was heard to say, that she would move heaven and earth, but that she would get one who should empty Mr. Selwyn's church.

"When informed of this speech, I hastened, full of wrath, to repeat it to Mr. Selwyn, who heard the news without a change of countenance; and, to my great surprise, he remarked, that if the kingdom of Christ were thereby to be promoted, he should not care if every preacher in England were to draw more souls than himself.

"'What!' I said, 'and would you lose all your popularity?'

"'Caroline,' he replied, 'have you lived with me so long, and not discovered that I desire not to regard these things?'

"The curate was obtained; and, after his first appearance in the pulpit, I was told that he was young, handsome, wore a diamond ring, and had a delightful voice. During his first Sunday, our church was very empty, which I observed to Mr. Selwyn; but he took little notice of my remark. Another and another Sunday came, and the new minister continued to attract multitudes, while many of our pews continued void.

"Whenever we returned from church, I remarked this circumstance to Mr. Selwyn, repeating it in his presence on every possible occasion; but he still persevered in

turning a deaf ear to my suggestions, and he pursued his usual round of duties with unabated and unaltered diligence. At length, he put me out of all patience by inviting Mr. Montague (for such was the name of the new minister) to our house, and treating him with the utmost cordiality.

“‘O, Caroline,’ he replied, when I had spoken to him on this subject, ‘how happy might we have been, could you but have been contented to give up for me and for yourself the admiration of the world, and the desire of popularity!—could you have submitted to seek to do good with a single eye to the glory of God, not seeking the praise of men, not caring for their reproaches, nor desiring to be deemed more praiseworthy than your neighbours! For, as your excellent grandmother used to say, the world is wide enough for us all, and heaven is wider still.’

“So saying, he dropped his face upon the head of his little girl, who was sitting on his lap, and I thought that he sighed. But though I thought so, I persisted, and said a great deal about his allowing every body to impose upon him, and take liberties with his name, adding, that such pusillanimous conduct might not only be injurious to his family, but also hurtful to the cause of religion. ‘If you lose your popularity, Mr. Selwyn,’ I remarked, ‘you will lose your usefulness. A man, in order to do good in society, must possess influence; and in order to have influence, he must be known: but you neither desire influence nor popularity.’

“‘And what then would you have me do?’ said he, sighing again and more audibly.

“‘Do?’ I said: ‘in the first place, you should not have suffered your wife to be insulted with impunity by such a low character as Letitia Delaney and her old husband; you should not have put up with the sneers and taunts of the doctor in all companies, as you have done; you should not have let every fool take the lead, as you do, in all public meetings.’

“‘Nor let my wife find fault with me at home,’ he added, cutting me short, with some quickness, but much good-humour. ‘And now, my dear Caroline, let me have some tea; and, if you please, we will drop this subject.’

"On this, I burst into tears, and my husband left the room. I saw him, but a few minutes afterwards, carrying his child about the garden, and perhaps thinking how happy he should have been, had Lucy been her mother—at least, my selfish and jealous heart told me that these were his thoughts.

"It was now summer time, and the weather was extremely hot, and the town and neighbourhood were very full and very gay. Lord and Lady D—— were again among us, and our bishop, also, was come to confirm, and to spend some days in the town. While his Lordship was with us, he was invited to dinner at the nobleman's house where Lord and Lady D—— were visiting, and all the clergy in the town and neighbourhood, together with their families, were also asked to meet him.

"After the cloth was withdrawn, and the servants were gone out, our discourse turned upon religious subjects, and to the great exertions which were then being made in the kingdom for the promotion of religion. His Lordship then took occasion to compliment Mrs. Delaney on her activity in the schools; and, to my great amazement and high indignation, he addressed not a word to me on the subject; a circumstance which was attributable solely to his want of information, but which gave me extreme pain and mortification, such as I had no power of concealing from those who intimately knew me.

"From this visit I returned in such a state of violent mental agitation, that, as soon as I alighted from the carriage, I fell into a strong hysterical fit, shrieking with all my might, and refusing to hear reason from any one. When I became a little more calm, I reproached Mr. Selwyn for his tameness, and angrily asked him why he did not enter into an explanation with the bishop, and inform him that it was not Letitia Delaney, but his own wife, who had been the only active person in the schools.

"'Because,' said he, 'such an explanation could not, with propriety, have come from me.'

"'And why not?' I said.

"'Because,' he replied, 'it would have been opposed to every principle on which I have hitherto acted. Was it for vain glory that you established your school, Caroline? God forbid that I should have such a thought of

you. And if, on the contrary, you did it for the glory of God, then you ought not to be disturbed by any misapprehensions of his Lordship on the subject.'

"I had for some time past failed to receive my husband's gentle rebukes in silence, and, on the contrary, I indulged in the habit of contending and disputing with him on every point; a habit into which all persons are prone to fall, who are lovers of self, and tenacious of their own opinions. I therefore suffered not this matter to rest, after having once expressed my sentiments with respect to it, but I returned to it again and again, always ending with this declaration—that I saw that we were losing our influence in the town, and that no doubt we should do so more and more, if Mr. Selwyn did not assert his dignity, come forward in society, and take the lead more decidedly on public occasions.

"The consequence of these frequent disputes was, that Henry withdrew himself increasingly from me; and, as he seemed resolved not to quarrel with me, his manner became cold, restrained, and distant.

"And now I draw near to that most dreadful part of my history, on which I cannot, even at present, after the lapse of years, reflect with a tranquil mind. The season, as I before remarked, was intensely hot, and a kind of intermitting fever had attacked many persons, and carried off several. I thought that my husband had appeared low for some days, that is, when I had thought about him at all; for, as usual, my mind had been in a ferment respecting some foolish report or other relative to myself; when, one day, I was summoned into Lucy's room, her nurse being alarmed to find her flushed and feverish when she went to take her up in the morning. I had observed her in the garden, in her father's arms, only on the preceding evening, as I was sitting talking, in my drawing-room-window, with one of my gossiping neighbours; I had seen him pluck a rose, and put it into her bosom; and I remembered that she had laid her head on his shoulder in a manner which led me to think that she was sleepy. All these occurrences rushed into my mind in a manner peculiarly affecting, as I stood by her bed, and beheld, with trembling apprehension, her flushed and fevered cheek, and other indications of severe illness. I sent immediately for medical assistance,

and dispatched another servant for my husband, who was, I knew, gone from home.

"Mr. Selwyn soon returned; but never shall I forget his evident agony when he saw the state of the child, though it was plain that he endeavoured to the utmost to appear composed.

"I have particularly enlarged in many parts of my narrative, but here I cannot. The scenes which followed this melancholy morning, though indelibly graven on my mind, would baffle all description. Suffice it to say, that my deep-rooted selfishness was itself eradicated by the poignancy of my own sorrows, and by the view of the unutterable, silent, and subdued distress of my husband. After seven days' illness, our child expired; and, had Mr. Selwyn then possessed a wife to whom he could have turned with comfort and satisfaction, he himself might perhaps have survived. But he had now caught the fever which had destroyed his child, and, being in a low state of spirits before the sickness of his beloved little one, he was unable to contend with the disease, and he therefore survived her only a few days.

"But before he took to his bed, while our little darling one was lying unburied, he never left her side; and one day, when I had stolen upon him unawares, I heard him thus address the remains of his infant: 'Ah, Lucy! child of my heart! no more do you meet your father's voice with those gentle glances and sparkling smiles which were wont to delight my happy heart! Ah, lovely one! sweet companion of many a solitary hour! I shall never more enjoy thy presence on earth, but I shall soon rejoin thee in a better world!'

"Then kissing her dimpled hand, and having fallen on his knees, he presented before the throne of grace an address so solemn, so full of hope and confidence in redeeming love, so entirely free from all trust in self or in his own good works, so full of gratitude for that which had been done to secure his own and his child's salvation, that I was about to step forward and kneel by him, when I heard him proceed in a humble strain of supplication for me. His voice was low, but I could distinguish all that he said. He entreated for me an entire change of heart, as for one who was yet in the bondage of sin; he requested that my afflictions might be sanctified to

me; that I might sacrifice all my appetite for earthly glory and human praise; that I might be wholly emptied of self, humbled, and brought low, in order to my being finally exalted; that my motives might be purified, my labours blessed, my activity rightly directed, and the very thoughts of my heart sanctified. Then suddenly looking on his child, and breaking out into fresh agonies, ‘O my Father, my Father,’ he said, ‘bless, bless the mother of my Lucy!'

“So saying, his head again sunk on the bed; and I hastened away, not to make a display, as on many former occasions, of false and affected feelings, but to conceal my deep and genuine sorrow.

“My beloved husband survived his child only fifteen days; and he was, by his own especial desire, buried in the same grave with her. And thus the solemn tomb closed over all that was dear to me on earth: and from that time I think I may presume to date the change of heart whereby I received, as it were, a train of feelings entirely new, which rendered me as unlike what I previously had been, as if I had undergone another birth.

“After my husband’s death, I lay for a long time as it were stunned by the blow, stupified, and scarcely capable of appreciating my dreadful loss. But with returning reason I felt so bitter a sense of the sins of my past life, that I was made to abhor and loathe myself as the vilest of vile creatures; and to see, that, during my whole life, I had been under the dominion of the most cruel and selfish passions. My envy of my lovely cousin, my neglect of her during my grandmother’s illness, my violent rancour against Letitia, my desire of human praise, my want of fidelity in those things committed to my charge, my eye-service, my jealousy, my tormenting temper to my beloved husband, who was now no more, my frequent neglects of my child, all, all now rose before me, and I was made to see with detestation, that love of self, which had precluded my rightly discharging a single relative duty. I was made to see, that he who would love his neighbour, must first begin by moderating his self-love, or rather by seeking help from him who alone is able to dissolve the heart of stone, and to impart a heart of flesh in its stead. In short, all my strong holds of self-love and self-righteousness were overthrown, and I was made

to see that self-love is the natural tyrant of the heart; that it had hitherto reigned in my heart, to the exclusion of all that was truly good; and that the work of grace never advances while this tyrant retains its undiminished influence.

"Twenty years are now passed since Lucy and her beloved father have been in glory; and during that period I have been a mourner, not only in outward appearance, but also in heart. My retreat has for some years past been in the house of a respectable farmer, who married the little orphan girl, who had been the protégée of my dear husband, and who was well educated and endowed by him. In her I have found a daughter and a friend; and in Mrs. Stephens, whose family are now all dispersed, I possess an affectionate neighbour, in whose spiritual welfare I have a lively interest. I have been justly condemned to many melancholy hours. Nevertheless, I have found much peace since my mind has been reconciled to the loss of my beloved ones; but my peace has not been of this world.

"And now, having concluded the painful task which I had undertaken, I trust that my example may prove a warning to others, and that my youthful reader may be led, by my narrative, to discover that it is possible to give up the gay world, and what are called its pleasures, without any real relinquishment of pride and selfishness; and also that my example and my history, so full of sorrow, is an indubitable proof that where selfishness remains unsubdued, it is impossible that we can rightly fulfil our duty towards our neighbours, even in the most inadequate degree; for the social duties are allowed, even by the heathen, to consist in a renunciation of self for the good of others; and certain it is, that where self remains in force, whatever profession of religion may be made, there can be, really, no true conversion, or change of heart. The finest example which can be conceived of the entire absence of selfishness, is in Christ our blessed Saviour; and the more we contemplate his character, the more ought we to deplore our own extreme hardness, selfishness, and cruelty, and to lie humbled and subdued under the conviction.

"But now, inasmuch as it appears that it will not long be permitted me to remain separated from my husband

and my child, since severe disease is making deep, though hitherto silent inroads on my constitution, I conclude my narrative, humbly entreating you, my young reader, as you value your present and eternal happiness, to beware of self-indulgence, and remembering the golden rule, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*, learn to deny thyself, in order that thou mayest have wherewith to comfort thy brother."

The lady of the manor having finished her story, which had occupied more of the evening than she had expected, called her young people to prayer without loss of time.

A Prayer for that State of Mind which may enable us to feel and act towards our Fellow-Creatures with the Sincerity of perfect Christian Charity.

"O ALMIGHTY FATHER, who alone art acquainted with the windings and deep intricacies of the human heart, impress us with a due sense of our extreme depravity; make us to know and feel that all which proceeds from self alone, every desire and impulse, every thought and motive of action which originates in the un-renewed heart, is utterly vile, corrupt, and abominable; and give us grace, O blessed Lord God, to regulate the inclinations of our own wills with reverence and holy fear; teach us to loathe the workings and suggestions of our unsanctified natural affections, and enable us to submit ourselves entirely, and on all occasions, to the guidance of thy Holy Spirit. Set us at liberty, O righteous Lord God, from the desires of the flesh, which work all manner of abominations. Help us to dethrone the idol self, and to set up thine image in its stead. Let all self-seeking be held in abhorrence by thy servants. Grant that our charity towards our fellow-creatures, and especially towards those with whom we are familiarly associated, may be ardent and Christian-like. Teach us to rejoice with those that do rejoice, and weep with those that mourn. Enable us, through all the diversified scenes of this life, to interest ourselves only about the glory of God, and the real good of our neighbours. Enable us, by faith and heavenly wisdom, to discern our own ad-

vantage in the promotion of thy glory, and in the extension of thy kingdom on earth. Teach us to cast our cares on thee; and give us that singleness of eye, and sincerity of heart, whereby we may be enabled to walk steadfastly forward in the way of duty, keeping our hands clear from the gain of ungodliness, and our minds free from any desire of encroaching on the rights of others. Empty us, O blessed Lord God, of all proud and ambitious feelings, all desires of supplanting others, or of obtaining advantages over them. Teach us to glory in the excellencies of our brethren, and to rejoice in their prosperity; and grant, that, under the pressure of affliction, we may be humble and resigned, submissive to thy holy will, and prepared to await thy time of our deliverance, in patience, and hope, and firm faith, that all will work together for our good, through Him that loved us and died for our salvation.

“ And now, O holy Father, we confess and bewail all the offences of our carriage during our past lives; we acknowledge and deplore the numberless envious, malicious, and cruel suggestions of our wicked hearts, and those various acts of eye-service wherewith we have mocked our God, and endeavoured to deceive our fellow-creatures: and we pray thee to grant, that we may never again be left to listen to the vile insinuations of our evil hearts, but that henceforward we may be wholly devoted to thy service, that thou, the Great and Mighty God, mayest in all things be glorified by us, through Jesus Christ.

“ And now, O blessed Lord God, to thee be all honour and glory, at this time, and for evermore. Amen.”

CHAPTER XXV.

Second Conversation on our Duty towards our Neighbour.

ON OUR DUTY TO INFERIORS.

"**M**Y dear young people," said the lady of the manor, "when last we met, I entertained you with a narrative, by which I endeavoured to trace out and expose to you many of those intricate and hidden feelings, and springs of action, which too often embitter the comfort of our domestic circles, and poison the fountains of family love, causing the hearts of those who, in their infancy, have hung upon the same breasts to swell, in their advancing life, with rancour against each other, polluting every source of joy, and withering the innocent and natural delights of youth. It is my intention now to attempt to set before you a view of those feelings which too frequently mar our charity towards our inferiors; and, for this purpose, I shall read a short narrative to you, wherein that sweet spirit which suffereth long and is kind, is displayed in a simple and yet, I think, a very attractive form."

The lady of the manor then drew out a small manuscript, and the young ladies prepared to hearken with their usual complacency.

The New Millennium Hall; or, The History of Laura.

There is a book, now very scarce, called Millennium Hall, which gives an account of a society of ladies, who lived together, in a place of retirement, about the beginning of the last century, and who devoted their time to a variety of acts of charity and benevolence.

It happened, a few years ago, that a middle-aged lady, the sister of a baronet, a person possessing a handsome, independent fortune, was paying a visit in a country house, where, one rainy day, the scarce volume containing the history of the ladies of Millennium Hall was placed in her hands.

This lady, whom we shall call Mrs. Dorothea Oldfield, had, from the age of sixteen, entered with avidity into all the moderate pleasures of the world, and had sufficiently experienced their emptiness, although she had not yet been led to know where to seek for satisfaction more solid than they could afford. She was therefore precisely in that state of mind the most likely to be amused and persuaded by a book which described, apparently, an attainable Utopia, such as a system similar to that which obtained in Millennium Hall seemed to promise. The old lady was, therefore, resolved to have a Millennium Hall of her own; and, being wholly unacquainted with the doctrine of man's depravity, and with the existing necessity of a something more effectual than the common restraints of good manners, to preserve a number of people dwelling together in one house, in that kind of order and agreeable harmony which is described as having prevailed in Millennium Hall, she determined immediately to take the requisite steps towards forming an establishment which should resemble and even eclipse this pretended paradise itself.

And here it should be remarked, that few books do more injury than those foolish and irreligious works which abound in every circulating library, and in which books the Christian virtues are represented as existing in various characters and situations in society, altogether unassociated with Christian principles. In works of this kind, the more pure the morality that is inculcated, the greater is the deception and consequent danger, and the more likely they are to produce destructive effects; and this, in the same degree, and on the same principle, that Socinianism is more to be feared in the present state of society than the disgusting idolatries of the Hindoo.

On this account, it is to be feared that those writers, both male and female, who have, as it were, robbed Christianity of her high and perfect morals and holy principles to deck those very characters that deny her

doctrines, will eventually find that they have been guilty of conduct more offensive in the eye of God, because more hurtful to man, than that of Belshazzar, when he commanded to bring the gold and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem, that the king and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink thereout.

But, that I might not digress too far from my story, I remark, that Mrs. Oldfield was not at a loss to fix upon a suitable situation for her establishment. There was on her brother's estate, in one of the most beautiful counties of England, a spacious old mansion, which had been deserted for some years past by the heads of the family; and, as it happened at that time to be vacant, she found no difficulty in obtaining it on very moderate terms.

This mansion stood in a small park, where a variety of trees, of very ancient growth, disposed in groups and clusters over an exceedingly irregular surface, presented, within a small compass, a considerable variety of umbrageous glade and breezy lawn; a running stream, which traversed this piece of ground in various directions, and which assumed all the caprices of a classic stream, by rushing precipitately from the higher grounds, and meandering gently through those which were more level, added not a little to the charms of this place.

The house itself, which had stood during a century or more, was built of small brick, now grown brown or rusty by time. It was low, considering the number of stories, and three of its sides were facing a court, which was laid out with gravel walks and parterres of flowers. Behind the house there was an old-fashioned garden, inclosed by a high wall, and at each corner of the garden was a summer-house. The number of chambers in this ancient mansion offered the convenience of a variety of separate apartments, and a noble dining-room and drawing-room promised accommodation for a very large family.

But, not to dwell on too many particulars of little importance, suffice it to say, that Mrs. Dorothea Oldfield found little difficulty in persuading several young ladies, whose fortunes perhaps scarcely equalled their birth and pretensions, to join her little society, in which she failed not to give them the promise of their certainly

finding all those enjoyments with which her own warm imagination had flattered her.

Among the young ladies who had been persuaded by Mrs. Oldfield to take up their abode in her beautiful retreat just mentioned, were two who were distinguished above the rest by the agreeableness of their persons, and, we may add, also, by their accomplishments. They were both descended from very respectable families, though in nowise related to each other. The name of one of these was Belinda, and the name of the other Laura. Belinda was one of those characters, specimens of which are to be found in every society, characters that cannot rest contented in any situation until they have formed to themselves a number of partisans who continually follow their steps and applaud their actions; while, on the other hand, Laura was of a modest and retiring carriage.

It was the rule of the house, that the young ladies should occupy the mornings in their own apartments, and meet together at dinner, and, if they pleased, also spend their evenings together.

On those occasions when the members of the family were met, Belinda seldom failed to take the lead in the conversation. Before she had been a month in the house, she had made every individual in it acquainted with her whole pedigree; and no one could relate any fact or piece of news, but it reminded her of some parallel case either in her own experience, or in that of some one of her connexions. As her countenance, however, was agreeable, her manner cheerful, and her address easy, and as polite as egotism would permit it to be, she was generally liked, and her company, in consequence, much sought after.

The society in this New Millennium Hall had little notion of vital and experimental religion; but its members submitted, nevertheless, to all the exterior forms which our Church enjoins, and several little schemes of benevolence were already in agitation in this young society, when somewhat of a revolution was effected in the sentiments of the family by the death of the former minister of the parish, and the introduction of another. The old minister had been a person from whom little was to be learned; but his successor, whom we shall

call Francis Woodfield, was a young man who knew the truth and preached it consistently, though he failed in practice, not altogether in points of strict morality, but rather in that gravity and strict decorum becoming a minister of Christ.

It would have been well if he had visited but seldom in the house of Mrs. Oldfield, and then rather on distant than on more intimate terms. But the society of the hall afforded too many charms for a young man living in a solitary village, to permit him to resist its influence in his own proper strength; and he therefore tried to make himself believe that he could not employ his time more profitably than in endeavouring to convert the ladies of the hall. He therefore visited them continually, and religion was constantly made the subject of discourse over the tea-table.

Mr. Francis Woodfield, as I before said, understood his Bible; at least he possessed much head knowledge, and perhaps was not without the desire of living up to what he knew: but much, certainly, was wanting to his being what might be wished; otherwise, he would not have attempted to undertake so great a work as the conversion of many souls in a manner so light as that in which he presumed it might be effected, namely, in lively chitchat over a dish of tea.

Mr. Francis Woodfield's views of religion were, as I before said, not contrary to Scripture; it was not, therefore, to be supposed that these new doctrines should be received by the ladies of the hall without considerable opposition and animadversion. But as the young rector was a great favourite, the opposition was more tempered than it probably would have been, had an older or a rougher-faced man broached the same doctrines in their ears.

In cases of dispute, Belinda was in general the spokeswoman of the party, and shewed much liveliness and readiness in argument. After a decent time, however, the fair disputant commonly gave way, and professed herself convinced of the importance of each disputed point; and in a short time Mr. Woodfield flattered himself that the greater part of the sisterhood were in a way to be converted.

About this time, the society having lived together

nearly a year, during the summer months many of the young ladies went abroad to see their friends, and the family was, in a manner, broken up for some weeks.

When the party was re-assembled, it was found that several of the fair individuals had, during their separation, met with opportunities of hearing good preachers; but through the mismanagement of their first teacher, who had brought them on too rapidly, and led them to think that they were somewhat advanced Christians, when as yet they had probably not taken one step towards the way of salvation, they had been unable to derive real profit from what they heard; and, having been called to listen to sermons intended for converted persons, they had become puffed up by this strong meat, and were, therefore, almost in a worse case than before they had heard the word of salvation.

The individual who begins his Christian career in any other way than by humility and self-abasement, may go on fairly for a time; but let him be assured that he has deep waters to go through before he can attain the end of his course.

Thus the young party went smoothly on, supposing that they were in a fair way soon to reach Mount Zion. But, like Ignorance in the "Pilgrim's Progress," it is to be feared that many of them wanted their certificate; for, though they could talk well on most points of doctrine, yet they never felt the plague of their own hearts, and, of course, but imperfectly knew their need of the Saviour.

Of Belinda it might be said, that, as some fine ladies play with chemistry, botany, and even with deism and atheism, in order to render themselves singular, she became professedly pious upon the same false principle, and not only pious, but benevolent; and busied herself in establishing day-schools and various other institutions, in order, one would think, that she might have something to talk about, and appear conspicuous among her companions. And, in deducing this inference, we do not wrong her; because it was evident to every acute observer, that she felt no pleasure in any of these works of charity, unless she herself took the lead in them; neither did she rejoice at any thing which she had been enabled to do, because it was likely to conduce to the

glory of God, but simply because it had been brought about by her own successful exertions.

But now to refer to Laura, of whom we have not spoken for a long time. This diffident young person had listened with considerable attention to the conversation which had passed between Mr. Woodfield and Belinda, and she had constantly, in private, consulted her Bible, in order to convince herself that the arguments which Mr. Woodfield used were consonant with Scripture.

Laura's apartment was one of the most remote in that wing of the house which was almost entirely appropriated to the use of the young ladies, and her window opened upon a part of the garden much secluded from the rest by trees and shrubs, many of which were evergreens. She had an opportunity, therefore, of frequently sitting to read and meditate at the window, unobserved by any of her companions; and she was led, by divine grace, habitually to influence and animate her meditations by solemn and earnest addresses to her Maker. She began, as it were, to feel her way in the dark; but the Lord was leading her by a way that she knew not, and, ere she was aware, He set her feet in the road to Zion.

It is not our present purpose to enter into the particulars of Laura's conversion. Suffice it to say, that it was a gradual, silent, and unobtrusive work, wholly disregarded by those under whose eye it was passing, yet, nevertheless, it was effectual because it was of God.

Laura had always been a modest and retiring character; but she had possessed much natural pride; and perhaps it was even to this feeling that she at first owed the dignified reserve and decorum of her deportment; for where no better principle is found to exist, pride itself has not unfrequently kept females within the bounds of prudence: but, like all other false principles, its effects are but partial, and, in instances where it may seem to have a salutary influence over one part of the life of the individual who may possess it, it brings shame, disgrace, and contempt, upon that very character, amidst other circumstances.

But the first and immediate effect of religion upon Laura was, to make her humble; and her humility instantly diffused a softness and sweetness over her manners, which they did not before evince.

That person who has at once a clear view of his own depravity, and of what he consequently owes to his Saviour, will necessarily become humane and tender towards his fellow-creatures. Accordingly, Laura's religion speedily produced this effect, and she began silently but seriously to consider in what points she had hitherto failed in her duty towards her neighbours.

As I before remarked, she presently found occasion to reform her manner with respect to her equals, and especially towards Belinda. She felt that she had hitherto allowed herself in unwarrantable irritation, on account of the overbearing forwardness of this young lady, by which she attempted to make every one submit to her caprices, and left little room for others even to venture an opinion.

Laura was now made sensible that she had been guilty of as great an offence against Christianity, by her cold disdain of Belinda's conduct, as the young lady herself had committed by her over-forwardness. Laura, however, now lost no time in repairing this offence; availing herself of every opportunity of behaving with a marked politeness and attention towards Belinda, which politeness the other received with a smiling kind of condescension, of such a nature as, to a proud spirit, would have been less welcome than rudeness itself.

When Laura left Millennium Hall, at the same time with the rest of the young ladies, she went to visit a family, one of the sons of which, a young clergyman from the University of Cambridge, was decidedly pious, and withal, more discreet and watchful than is common even to religious young men to be.

Laura was much benefited by the conversation of this young man, and her eyes were thus opened on many subjects which she had not before considered, though she never had any private discourse with him. And after her return to the hall, she felt that she was not acting as a Christian, if, when she saw her companions in an error, she did not endeavour to set them right. Accordingly, she took occasion, one day, when she heard her young friends speaking with what she deemed too much confidence of the progress which they had made in the good way, to point out the necessity of deep humility as the groundwork of all true religion.

In reply to this, Belinda took her up warmly, but not in a way of contradiction: on the contrary, she told her that she wondered why she should take so much pains to prove what every person in the company knew so well, and always acted upon; and appealed to those who were present to witness her assertion. “Are you not all, my friends,” said she, “thoroughly persuaded of the importance of humility in religion? and is not the whole of the Christian system exemplified by this one single truth, that *They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick:* and, if so, how can any one be accounted a Christian, unless he knows himself to be a sinner?”

Belinda then proceeded to give the company an account of several things within her own experience, which she thought bore upon the point in question; and she would fain have made it appear that John Bunyan himself had not suffered more from conviction of sin, and dread of being found to be a vessel fitted only for destruction, than she herself had done. Thus was Laura quieted on this occasion; and in a manner somewhat similar was she silenced on every other, when she endeavoured to give utterance to any of her ideas on religious subjects before any individual of the family. She therefore determined to leave them all to themselves, and to seek for objects out of doors, on which to exercise her benevolence and love.

But, as the ground was pre-occupied near the hall and in the village, and as she, therefore, found that she could not exert herself in those quarters without continually coming in contact with some of her sisterhood, with whom, as I before said, her ideas did not assimilate, she resolved to go further abroad, in order to seek suitable objects for the exercise of her humanity. Neither was she long at a loss; there being, in the next parish, about a mile distant from the hall, a portion of what had once been a royal forest. The greater part of this forest had been cleared and cultivated; but the residue, which still remained a wood, was occupied by a few poor wood-cutters, well known, at least by report, in the neighbourhood, for their petty depredations and other scandalous habits.

As these poor creatures resided at a considerable distance from their parish church, they lived in the ha-

bitual neglect of divine service; and as their appointed pastor was not one of those shepherds who search the sheep and seek them out, (*Ezek. xxxiv. 11,*) they had hitherto been allowed to continue (though dwelling in the midst of one of the most enlightened countries in the world) in a state of the grossest heathen darkness.

Laura, therefore, conceived that this benighted spot of the country might afford her an ample field for many works of Christian charity; and she resolved, at least, to make the attempt to do these people some good: and although it required no little courage to introduce herself among these savages, (for such in fact they were,) yet she did not doubt that she should find means to render her visits to them acceptable. She accordingly made choice of a girl about fourteen years of age, the daughter of a cottager in the neighbourhood, to accompany her in her walks to the forest; and, with this little escort, she set forth on a fine morning in autumn, soon after the re-assemblage of the party at the hall.

It was precisely at that period of the year when the leaves, having changed their colour, still continue to hang on the boughs which they had adorned through all the months of summer. A thick dew, which had been touched by frost, stood glistening on every blade of grass; and the more distant landscape was covered by a bright mist which gradually vanished as the sun arose higher in the heavens.

Laura was led by her youthful companion along a narrow and retired lane, for the distance of three quarters of a mile, till suddenly she was brought out upon a heath, over one narrow corner of which she saw the forest above mentioned. The cottages of which she was in quest appeared like so many thatched huts scattered among the trees; and as the ground upon which they stood was very irregular, they formed altogether a very picturesque, and to Laura, who beheld them with an eye of Christian love, a truly interesting scene.

As Laura had expected, she found but little difficulty in introducing herself among the woodmen and their families. She had furnished herself with several little presents for the wild and half-naked children, who were playing at the cottage doors; and through their means she found ready access to the hearts of their parents.

The time would fail me, were I to enter into the particulars of all which Laura did for these poor people. She established a little school among them, which she visited regularly two or three times a week. She provided warm petticoats and cloaks for two or three of the oldest women. She frequently collected one or two families together, and read the Scripture to them; for there were few among them who could read themselves. She called upon and prayed with the sick, and made clothes for the infants.

Laura had visited this little society in the forest for several weeks, and, as she supposed, had become acquainted with every family belonging to it, when, one day, happening to go to a cottage which was situated further in the wood than some others, she saw beyond it, a pool which lay in a kind of valley or dingle, and which was closely grown round with flags and other water-plants. Beyond this pool she distinguished an old cottage, half hid by the pool-dam, built with timber, painted black, and with white stucco, and altogether presenting a ruinous and forlorn appearance. Owing to the leaves having now fallen, this cottage had become visible from the other side of the pool; for, when the trees were in full leaf, it was entirely concealed from the view of a person so situated.

Laura expressed some surprise at the sight of this dwelling, and asked who lived in it; for she perceived, by the smoke which ascended among the leafless trees, that it was inhabited.

In reply to this question, she was informed that nobody lived in it but the widow and her lodger.

"And who," said Laura, "is the widow?"

In answer to this enquiry, a very disastrous story was unfolded to the ears of Laura.—"A few months ago, a farmer's servant, a parish girl, and, consequently, a poor, friendless creature, had married a young woodman, and retired with him to this cottage, where they had lived in great happiness, till, on one miserable day, he was brought home dead, killed by the fall of a tree. From that time," said the relater of this story, "the poor body has been almost crazed; and it is more the pity, as she expects, in a few months, to bring into the world a poor fatherless babe."

Here was a tale of woe indeed, which brought tears into the eyes of Laura, who immediately hastened to see if any comfort might haply be imparted to the unhappy creature.

According to the affecting tales often furnished by works of fancy, the weeping widow still looks beautiful, notwithstanding her weeds, and cleanly, though in a state of the utmost poverty and helplessness; but in real life, poverty and helplessness are naturally accompanied by want of cleanliness, and the furrows and swollen features produced by tears mar all the freshness and beauty of youth.

Thus, when Laura had traversed one side of the edge of the pool and had descended by a narrow pathway, strewed with decayed leaves, round to the door of the cottage, which stood with its back to the pool, she was struck with the air of desolation and wretchedness of every kind which evidently pervaded the whole dwelling; and, as she put her hand upon the top of the half-door to open it, she shrunk back involuntarily, and was obliged to summon her Christian principles to her aid in order to prevail on herself to pursue an adventure which promised nothing, at first view, but circumstances of disgust and horror.

The house itself was so thoroughly ruinous, both within and without, that in many places the plaster had fallen from the wall, presenting the bare laths to the eye, and leaving chinks through which there was ready entrance for many a winter blast. The floor was of clay, and two or three mean and worn-out pieces of furniture bespoke the extreme poverty of the inhabitants of this wretched dwelling. A miserable looking old woman sat spinning in the wide chimney, and at the same time watching a pot, which was simmering over a few half-burnt sticks. But the object which most forcibly arrested the attention of Laura, was the wretched widow already mentioned. She was sitting at the foot of a crazy bedstead, which stood in one corner of the room. She appeared pale and even ghastly, her eyes stared wildly around, her ragged clothes scarcely covered her, and every thing about her person seemed to mark that she had ceased to take thought for any thing which might befall her, either good or bad. At her feet there lay a bundle of sticks, which she had been gathering in the wood, and which she had

thrown down, as if weary of her work, of herself, and of the whole world.

I shall not enter into every particular concerning the manner in which Laura introduced herself to this unhappy person. Suffice it to say, that her gentle carriage had sufficient influence, even during her first visit, to draw from the poor mourner a flood of tears, the first that she had shed for many days; and when Laura, after having given her a little present, promised to return and see her again, she expressed a desire that she would come very soon.

Laura's visit to the poor widow was soon and often repeated; and her attentions produced, undoubtedly, the most happy effect which could be desired: for though she could not excite her to take any interest in the things of this world, for which it was evident that she had lost all concern, nor induce her to the observance of more cleanly habits, although she supplied her with many comforts of clothes and linen, yet she was exceedingly successful in bringing her to the experimental knowledge of her Saviour. The soul of this poor widow became as the soul of a weaned child, and surely she behaved and quieted herself as a child that is weaned of its mother. (Psalm cxxxii. 2.) In her husband she seemed to have lost all that had reconciled her to a life of poverty and labour; and the circumstances of his death had given her a shock which proved too violent for her constitution, she probably never having been a strong woman.

When Laura first visited her, she seemed to have lost every object of affection on earth; and her ignorance was such, that she had scarcely even an idea of the Saviour. She looked forward to death as very near; for, from the time of her husband's fatal accident, she had invariably maintained the opinion that she should not survive the birth of her child: but she viewed the probable approach of her dissolution with that kind of stupid hopelessness which often characterizes persons in a dark and ignorant state.

But it pleased the Lord so greatly to bless the pious instructions of Laura to this poor and forlorn creature, that she acquired an exceedingly accurate knowledge of the Gospel dispensation with wonderful rapidity; and, as the term of her earthly existence fast waned away, her

love of the Saviour became more fervent, and her self-humiliation more sincere and earnest. But as she could not read herself, and as she was continually desirous to hear more and more of the holy Word of God, she became extremely importunate to Laura to come more frequently to see her and read to her; and as her house and her person were still, notwithstanding the care and the presents of this excellent young lady, in a state of disgusting disorder, it might certainly be deemed an act of severe self-denial for a young lady of her refined habits to spend, as she did, many hours in such a place and with such company. But the true Christian charity of Laura rendered her superior to all minor feelings; and, as she saw the poor widow's health gradually decline as the period of the birth of her child approached, she became increasingly attentive to her, and endeavoured to edify her with instructions that were more and more spiritual.

It is written, *He that watereth shall be watered also himself.* (Prov. xi. 25.) Accordingly, Laura, in endeavouring to bring forward this poor woman, made also a rapid advance, herself, in the divine course. But of this advance no one could be less sensible than she herself was; for, as her views of Gospel light grew increasingly clear, she became also more and more sensible of the depravity of her own heart, of her want of faith, and of the coldness of her love towards God: and thus, as the Sun of Righteousness shone more brightly into her heart, its dark corners and secret passages, together with all their abominations, became more and more conspicuous to her, and she saw, with increasing clearness, that nothing less than the incarnation and death of God himself could have saved her soul from hell; for sins great as her own, and transgressions infinite and countless as hers had been, required, she sensibly felt, an atonement of infinite value: and thus she was at length brought to the humbling conviction, that, had every individual of mankind, excepting herself, been faultless in their obedience, and wholly without sin, still, Christ must have died to have saved her only. Thus she was made sensible that she had been as guilty of the death of Christ, through her sins, as the wicked Jews were, who cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him;" and thus, having been led to consider the part that she had taken, as it were, in the death of Christ, she

began, also, to feel her peculiar interest in its glorious benefits: and thus, through faith, she was led to consider Christ as her own peculiar and invaluable Friend. Thus, gradually, the whole scheme of salvation was unfolded to her, and she was progressively enabled to see the Father, through the Son, displaying his everlasting love for his creatures, and in the Son the Spirit also revealed himself, till, at length, the entire outline of the mystery of redemption unfolded itself to her view, and her hope of salvation was rendered complete.

Whatever were the discoveries made to Laura on this subject, she endeavoured to impart them all to the poor widow; and she was surprised to find, that many things, to the attainment of which she had arrived by long and intense meditation only, were instantly comprehended and received by this poor creature, whose mind was, evidently, on every subject but that of religion, dark and feeble in the extreme.

Laura had seen no preparation made in the house for the reception of the expected infant, and she mentioned the subject to the mother. "Alas!" answered the poor woman, "when my husband was brought in dead to me, I well knew that I should never live to nurse and tend my child. But I have provided a square of flannel to wrap it in; and I know that, if it lives, it will certainly be taken care of."

"By whom?" said Laura, wishing to hear what she had to say.

"I have no kin," replied the poor woman, "and I never knew my parents; and there are none belonging to my poor husband living in this country. But I trust to you, dear Miss," added she, looking eagerly in Laura's face; "I know that you will take the babe, if God spares it, and nurse it for God."

Laura knew not what answer to make: she felt the awfulness and responsibility of such a charge, and she hardly had an idea how she should be able to fulfil it. But still she could not bring herself to say that she would not undertake the trust; and she was, therefore, silent.

The poor widow laid her emaciated, discoloured, and unwashed hands on Laura's delicate arm, and, construing her silence and hesitation into an assent to her pro-

posal, she thanked her for her kindness, and said that she now should die in peace.

Laura procured for this poor creature the advice of a neighbouring medical man; but he gave her little hope of the mother's long surviving the birth of her child.

Laura had thought seriously of the request made to her by the widow, and she saw all the inconvenience which might attend her compliance with it. At first, the expence struck her: she had no house of her own in which to receive the child, and her income was limited. "If I take this child under my protection, it cannot," she considered, "cost me less than twenty or fifteen pounds a year; for I must place it out to nurse, and I should certainly desire that it might be well brought up, and well taught in a humble way; and this cannot be done without money."

These reflections were made by the young lady as she sat in her own room. "Twenty pounds a year," she repeated, looking in her desk for her last half-year's account-book: for since Laura had become pious, she had been very exact in keeping her accounts: "Twenty pounds a year," she continued, talking to herself, "that is, ten pounds for half a year will be requisite for the child's use. I must, if I take this baby, save ten pounds every half-year, and from what can I save it?"

She now took a blank sheet of paper and her pen, and began to set down the articles in which she thought she might save, calculating according to her last half-year's expenditure. And first, she wrote down, Lace, twenty shillings; five shillings for ribbon; a ring, one pound; a lace veil, fifteen shillings; a row of beads, five shillings; copies for drawing, new music-books, &c. and a new publication, one pound. "All these things," said Laura, "I can do very well without; but still they all do not amount to the half of ten pounds." Laura continued to look on a little further, and she saw no article of expence which she could decently dispense with, till she came to the following entry, My journey to and from —, eight pounds ten. At this article Laura demurred. "My journeys," she said, "if I were to deny myself the pleasure of journeys, that sacrifice would make up the money in the summer, and also assist to-

wards the next half-year. But I cannot wholly give up the idea of going out."

Here was another demur. "I found the opportunities, while I was out, so profitable to me," thought Laura, "to my soul, to my religious state; Mr. —'s society is so very valuable, his conversation so pleasant, he is so agreeable, and his countenance so fine!"

Laura's conscience now smote her: she threw down her account-book, and falling on her knees, "O my Saviour, my Saviour!" she exclaimed, "assist me to overcome this temptation!"

Laura was assisted; for she rose up determined to adopt the poor widow's baby.

The moment that Laura had made up her mind on this subject, she became much more easy and happy than she had previously been; for she now had a very sweet and interesting object to engage her thoughts. And thus, having fully resolved to adopt this baby, she began, like a good mother, to provide for all its little wants, even before it was born.

"And who can tell how busy and happy she now was while converting her own fine old linen into little caps and shirts, and arranging them in a drawer in delicate order? And more than this, she took the precaution to engage the cottager before spoken of, and who herself had an infant nearly a year old, to nurse her little charge for her, in case its poor mother should die; and thus she arranged every thing with a solicitude and secrecy which did her great credit as a Christian; for she had not forgotten her Saviour's injunction, *Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth.*

Laura was an orphan; she had no parents nor near connexions, and she was, therefore, at liberty to act, and to manage her little property, as she pleased. Young women who have friends and guardians, would do well always to consult them with respect to the acts of charity which they may meditate, and no doubt they would often find themselves benefited by the judicious and prudent advice of godly friends. But Laura had none to consult except her Bible and her God; and it pleased the Lord to inspire her with that wisdom which is superior to all earthly knowledge.

"Laura had occupied all her spare hours during more

than a month in making preparations for the child, which she might soon be called upon to adopt, when, one day, immediately after dinner, a little boy arrived from the forest to request Miss Laura to come immediately to see the poor widow, who, he said, was very ill, and called for her.

Laura promptly obeyed the summons, and, calling by the way at Mary Hill's cottage, in order to take up her usual companion, she renewed her agreement with her, that she should take the infant if required.

When Laura reached the widow's cottage, the scene which presented itself to her susceptible mind was truly distressing. The infant which she had prepared herself to adopt had been born about two hours, and was lying, wrapped up in a blanket, upon the lap of the old woman who lodged in the house with the widow, a poor, feeble, and decrepid old creature, whom a long course of sin and misery had accustomed to contemplate woe with a heart unmoved. Accordingly, she sat, holding the newborn infant on her paralytic and trembling knees, without either evincing or feeling any other sentiment than that of a kind of stupid wonder at what might be the end of all this, supposing that the worst which was apprehended should happen, namely, the death of the poor mother. The nurse and two neighbours were standing by the bed of the suffering widow, with looks which instantly conveyed the strongest apprehensions to the mind of Laura.

Laura, on entering the cottage, first cast a pitying glance towards the infant; then, approaching the mother's bed, she looked first at the dying woman, (for dying she indeed was,) and then at the persons standing around. "We have done all we can," whispered the nurse: "we are giving her the wine that you provided; but nothing can save her."

"Where is Miss Laura?" said the expiring woman, in a hollow voice.

Laura spoke, and took the hand of the poor widow: on which, she lifted up her dying eyes towards heaven, and said, "My Saviour, I thank thee that thou hast heard my prayer!" She then made an ineffectual effort to raise herself, and endeavoured also to speak, but she could not express herself clearly. Upon this, she be-

came agitated, and strove to make herself understood by signs. But these failing of their purpose, she again attempted to speak, and made Laura comprehend that she wished for her to take the infant in her arms.

Laura, though trembling, never having touched so young an infant before, took the baby from the lap of the old woman, and brought it to its mother's bed; on which, the dying parent expressed full satisfaction, and said, "Take it, take it; keep it; it is yours."

On hearing the words of this awful bequest, Laura stood for a moment unable to speak; for she felt the high importance of the charge, and her heart was sensibly touched by the many affecting circumstances of the infant's case. As her mind, however, had been previously made up on what was to be her conduct towards the child, she inclined herself forward towards the dying woman, and said, "I accept your bequest, and, God assisting me, I will be a mother to your baby."

The poor woman had barely strength to say, "I thank thee, O my God!" and from that moment she seemed lost to all earthly concerns.

While Laura stood beside the bed of the poor woman, several changes passed upon her. She soon became unable to swallow the wine which the nurse put to her mouth, and she was now breathing her last, when Laura was awakened, by the cries of the infant, to other and more pressing concerns than the hopeless task of watching by the bed of the dying. The child still continuing to cry, she opened the blanket to give it more air. It had been hastily dressed in the clothes which Laura had prepared for its reception. Laura gazed on it till a tear dropped from her eye on its little unformed and tender cheek. It was now in want of food, and, by a natural instinct, it had therefore conveyed its little sprawling hand to its mouth, and was sucking it greedily.

The last sigh of the mother, and the words of the nurse, who, as she closed the mouth of the corpse, exclaimed, "Ah, poor soul! thou art happy now! thou art with the dear Saviour on whom thou calledst so earnestly all the live-long night in thy trouble!" just reached the ear of Laura, as she again cautiously covered up the babe.

"Poor creature!" said Laura; "and did she call on

her Saviour in her trouble? She is then happy: for *the Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.*" (Psalm cxlv. 18, 19.)

Laura then, still holding the babe in her arms, cast a farewell glance at the poor corpse, and, as if it could hear her, she repeated her assurance that she would never forsake the babe; and then, pathetically bidding the lifeless body a long adieu in the name of the infant, she wrapped her shawl around the baby, and walked out of the cottage, followed by her little attendant.

The baby was hungry, and Laura was anxious to put it in the arms of the nurse before the evening set in; and as the little thing was so exceedingly young and tender, she carried it herself, and could not think of intrusting it to the charge of her little handmaid.

The road along which Laura had to go, in order to convey the baby to the poor woman who was to nurse it, was very unfrequented. Laura had hitherto never met any one in it but poor working people. She therefore now concluded that she should pass unobserved, as on former occasions. But herein she was mistaken; for she had scarcely entered that part of the lane which ran under the park before mentioned, when she saw Belinda coming towards her, with three or four of her young companions, accompanied by the young clergyman of whom mention has been already so often made.

The first feeling of Laura was that of shame at being thus discovered in such a situation, and she made a motion to consign the infant to the arms of her little companion; but, as she opened the flannel to see whether all were well before she surrendered it, strong emotions of love and pity again swelled her heart, and a something which she could not define rose up to her throat, and produced a slight sensation of suffocation. The little helpless one had opened its eyes while under the shade of the shawl; but when that was removed, it closed them, as unable to bear the light, and presented such a picture of utter defencelessness and imbecility, that Laura drew it again closer to her bosom, and said within herself, "No, I will not part with you, my poor infant, but to place you in the arms of one who is better able to

administer to your wants than I am." Her mind then reverted to the poor pale corpse that she had just left; and she was thus prepared, as she trusted, with some confidence, to meet her companions. Nevertheless, as they drew near, she felt her cheeks begin to glow, and this glow was, doubtless, not a little increased, when Belinda, who was leaning on the arm of Mr. Woodfield, called to her while still at some distance, saying, "Why, my dear Laura, where do you come from? and what can you possibly have got there wrapped so carefully under your shawl?"

"I will explain this to you another time," replied Laura, affecting an ease which she did not feel, and attempting to pass onward.

But Belinda and her companions took sufficient care that she should not escape before they had satisfied their curiosity; for they all gathered themselves close round her, and so entirely intercepted her way, that it was impossible for her to advance.

Laura was now compelled to listen to all the enquiries and remarks of her companions, who, by slightly raising the shawl, had satisfied themselves that she was actually carrying an infant in her arms, as they had at first suspected. Laura, however, though she endeavoured to appear undisturbed, was much vexed at being thus delayed; and, finding that her inquisitive young companions would not otherwise be satisfied, she promised that she would explain every thing to them when they met at supper, if they would now let her go without further molestation: and thus they permitted her to proceed. Before, however, she was quite clear of them, she heard Belinda say to Mr. Woodfield, "That Laura is a dear good girl; but she has such odd ways, that one does not know what to make of them."

Laura was a little disconcerted by this remark: but she soon forgot this and every other selfish feeling, in the joy that she experienced when the kind cottager received the little baby into her bosom, and administered to her that nourishment which new-born infants so eagerly desire, and which thus furnishes an emblem of the pure doctrines of the Gospel, which the regenerate soul receives with such ardent appetite and sincere relish.

Laura had now leisure to contemplate her little adopted

charge. She rejoiced much that it was a girl, and that it gave the promise of health and strength: and no tender mother could have been more lavish in assurances of her rendering ample satisfaction to the nurse, if she succeeded in rearing the child, than Laura was to Mrs. Hill.

Laura stayed to see the baby well fed, and laid, in a sweet sleep, in a large wicker cradle, which had enshrined all the cottage children in succession, to the number of seven, before she thought of returning to the hall.

The party were just assembling for supper, when Laura, full of the important events of the evening, and expecting that she should be called upon for an explanation of all that had befallen her, entered the supper-room. But, instead of this explanation being required, her appearance was scarcely observed by any one, and when she sat down, not a single question was put to her.

The cause of this apparent unconcern about Laura's adventure was, that her young friends had already made themselves acquainted with all that they wished to know, and they were at this time engaged in discussing sundry proposals for a female club, of which Mrs. Oldfield was to be lady patroness, and Belinda president.

During the greater part of the time allotted for supper, Belinda warmly held forth in recommendation of this club, which, she said, if arranged according to the plan that she advised, would extend its benign influence to the removal of every distress, which money could relieve, in the parish. In corroboration of this assertion, she produced a printed volume, containing an account of an establishment of this nature which had been instituted somewhere else, and representing the astonishingly good effects which it had produced. And, after supper, she called for pen, ink, and paper, and insisted, that Mr. Woodfield should lose no time in writing down the resolutions of the company on the subject.

While the young gentleman was thus occupied, one of the party proposed an amendment of some of the rules, and this introduced new discussions; during which, the secretary sat, with his pen in his hand, listening for the decisions.

In the mean time, Laura, having ascertained that her opinion was not likely to be asked, had, in imagination, wandered away from the present company to the orphan

baby, who she hoped was sleeping in the arms of its nurse, and her thoughts led her, still further, to the cottage on the brink of the pool where the corpse of the poor mother lay, perhaps at that moment deserted and forgotten by all the world. From this mournful scene, her mind, by a natural connexion, began to mount, on the wings of faith, to the Saviour, the hope of the pious dying, and the joy of the holy dead: and she was endeavouring to picture to herself the happiness of the redeemed spirit, set free from this mortal body and admitted into the glorious presence of the Lord, when, suddenly, she was recalled from this train of interesting reflection by Belinda, who, addressing her in a voice of much self-importance, said, as if in connexion with something which had gone before, "And if our plans succeed—and they will be sure to do so, if the excellent prospectus which I have had the pleasure of laying before the company is adhered to—we shall very soon be able to relieve you, my dear Laura, from the charge you have so laudably taken upon yourself; and, at any rate, we shall not, on any account, allow the whole burden to lie upon you. I must insist upon being allowed the pleasure of assisting you; and I am sure that there is not one in the present company who will not put in her claim for the same privilege."

Laura thanked her young friends, and was about to embrace that opportunity of explaining how the infant came into her hands, an explanation which she considered due to the company in general, and to Mrs. Oldfield in particular; but before she had made up her mind how to begin her statement, Belinda had diverged from the point, and had commenced a story, in which she gave an account of having been present at a death-bed scene, somewhat similar to that of the poor widow, and then she entered into an explicit description of her own acute feelings on the occasion.

Laura now perceived, by the connexion between Belinda's story and the death which she herself had witnessed that evening, that the greater part, if not the whole, of her adventures were already known to the company, but by what means they had become so, she knew not. This circumstance, however, accounted for the apparent want of curiosity which she had wondered at in her young friends. She therefore concluded that she

might now be spared all further explanations; and, as the discussions on the subject of the club continued to be carried on with great warmth, she contrived to withdraw to her repose.

You may rest fully assured that Laura did not forget her baby that evening in her prayers; and the next morning, by daybreak, she was risen, and had made up a small bundle of clothes to carry to the little orphan.

Her heart beat when she drew near the cottage-door, fearing that she might not find the little tender creature alive; but, on her entering, its nurse gave her an excellent account of its night's rest, and introduced Laura into her little chamber, in order that she might see it still asleep in the warm corner in which Mrs. Hill had left it.

There are some moments of life, in which the believer has a kind of foretaste of almost heavenly joy. Laura had a perception of this peculiar delight during the whole of the time which was employed in her walk back from the cottage to the hall, after she had seen her baby lying so sweetly asleep. Many exceedingly transporting reflections were vouchsafed to her during these moments; and she was favoured with a clear and a most reviving manifestation of the love of the Saviour to his sinful and distressed creatures, and especially of his goodness towards the poor widow and her orphan baby, in providing the one with the means of becoming wise unto salvation, and the other with every supply requisite for her present wants.

When Laura met her young friends at breakfast, she enquired whether any thing had been settled concerning the club, but she was put off with a very vague reply.

Belinda was writing at a side-table, from which she arose in a few minutes, to communicate her ideas. "I have been thinking," said she, "that it would have a most beautiful and elegant effect, Mrs. Oldfield, if we were all to wear a kind of uniform. For instance, if we all wore chip hats, decorated with white satin, and mantles trimmed with the same."

This idea, on which Belinda enlarged considerably, was received with great eclat by the company at large. Laura, however, looked grave, and even ventured to say, that if money were spent on things of this kind, their charitable plans must be greatly abridged.

Belinda and several others of her companions had much to say on this subject. "Benevolence," said she, "must not run into excess. The benefit of trade is to be considered, and if the higher orders cease to dress conformably with their station, there will be no indications of ranks, and all distinctions in society will be confused and lost."

Belinda then particularly cautioned Laura against excess in her charities, and against the appearance of oddness and peculiarity, which, she said, commonly proceeded from pride; and Mrs. Oldfield advised her seriously to deliberate, before she burdened herself with the charge of an infant, which she might hereafter find a very heavy and painful weight upon her.

Laura pleaded, that throughout Scripture there was a blessing pronounced upon those who befriended the fatherless and the widows; that she had done only what she considered herself called upon to do in common humanity; and that she trusted in God, if he saw that her motives were pure, that he would never give her occasion to repent of her conduct, but that, if he saw that there was aught either of pride or selfishness in her actions, he would do well to try them in the fire of affliction and persecution.

Mrs. Oldfield replied, that Miss Laura spoke like a young woman who did not know what persecution and afflictions were, and added, that the advice which she now gave her proceeded only from friendship. She informed her, that the parish to which the infant belonged might be compelled to keep it, and that, if Laura forsook it, it still would not be left to starve.

Laura replied, that she had been in the habit of spending greater sums on luxuries, trinkets, and trifles, than would supply the poor child in question with more than it could want, as she meant to bring it up in the condition to which it was born; and that she hoped that her kind friends would, therefore, not blame her for sparing from herself what she could so well do without.

Mrs. Oldfield still persisted in affirming, that, whatever she might choose now to do, she still did wrong in undertaking what might hereafter prove a burden to her.

Laura might have answered, "The present time only is all that a mortal being can say is actually at his com-

mand, and let him, therefore, take care to fill up each passing hour with such good works as may be in his power, leaving the rest to God ; ” and, further, she might have added, that the ability of the liberal man is generally enlarged in a degree equal to that of his faith, and that persons seldom find that their past charities lay them under subsequent burdens. Laura was, however, young, and, had she been able to adduce such arguments on her own side, she probably would have done as well to receive, as she did, the rebukes of her companions in humility and comparative silence. As it was, however, though she was not convinced by the arguments employed against her, yet she was silenced by them, and was, therefore, glad to embrace the first opportunity of escaping to her own room, from whence she soon afterwards proceeded to pay a second visit to her baby.

Time would fail, were I to attempt to bring before you an account of the various acts of kindness which Laura exercised towards her little adopted one, and how she delighted in discovering every step that the infant took towards improvement. I forbear to say how pleased she was when it first followed the light of a candle around the cottage with its eyes of dark blue, and how she exulted when those eyes were first lighted up with a smile which threw intelligence into every dimpled feature.

It was so ordered by Providence, that the infant was remarkably pleasing, and the delicate yet humble state of neatness in which Laura kept it added not a little to its infantine attractions. All, therefore, as far as the infant was concerned, was agreeable and encouraging ; and Laura had hitherto found her self-denial more than repaid by the smiles of the little orphan, by which, in fact, she was so much attracted, that she insensibly became almost entirely absorbed by them, and she, therefore, began to lose all interest in every other charitable duty, excepting the visiting of the poor in the wood.

This spirit by degrees alienated her from her companions, and she thus acquired, without knowing it, a kind of contemptuous disregard of whatever they either proposed or actually performed in the way of doing good : for she could not but remark a circumstance which is common with respect to those who act in societies, that the good effects produced were not commensurate with

the trouble and bustle excited, and she was now become weary of all that parade, which brought forth so little fruit; and, consequently, she allowed herself to treat all their proposals with uniform and perfect indifference: and thus, whatever weight and influence she might possess in the society, was used by her to the hindrance of that which was right and useful rather than to its promotion.

And in this place we may well take occasion to remark, that in whatever degree selfishness operates in the conduct, it obstructs usefulness in an equal proportion. The truly humble Christian should always be ready to assist in every work of kindness and charity, without considering how far that work either may or may not conduce to his own particular credit or advancement. Blessed are they who seek the honour which cometh of God rather than that which cometh from man. There are, however, but few characters which are not biassed in their conduct towards their neighbours by selfishness, or by that which differs only from absolute selfishness in a very slight degree. When a selfish spirit, or a party spirit, which is only a particular modification of a selfish one, creeps into any work of benevolence, that work will either be grievously marred in its very appearance, or wholly deprived of its vitality and usefulness, even though its appearance may continue to be imposing; and it may often be remarked, that a selfish and narrow-minded character, though in the main desiring to act well, as often obstructs the good intentions of his neighbours as he promotes his own schemes, and thus, in the long run, he adds very little to the common stock of human happiness.

The various ways in which usefulness in general is obstructed by a selfish or party spirit cannot here be fully enumerated and explained; but we will, however, take occasion to point out some few of them.

There are many instances in which characters are, individually, so wedded to their own peculiar modes of doing good, that they either hinder or oppose the exertions of every other person whose operations of charity do not exactly coincide with their own; and thus much mischief is done, or, rather, much good is prevented. Could a well-meaning but selfish individual of this description only examine an accurate calculation of all the

good of which (humanly speaking) he had been the prevention by this narrow spirit, the awful total would perhaps drive him to despair.

When one minister or teacher has, through jealousy, weakened the influence of another, whom he knows to be upon the whole a godly man, though differing from him on some minor points, he is, in a certain sense, accountable for every soul which (humanly speaking) might have been benefited but for his interference.

When a minister or teacher aims to display his own eloquence, learning, or talent, rather than to promote the glory of God, his instructions fail of the only end to which they ought to lead, and he thus obstructs his usefulness in the most material point. He may, indeed, procure to himself admirers and followers, but he is awfully accountable for the souls which he leads, not to the worship of the living God, but to the service of a perishing idol.

Wherever, in minor points, an individual, through an overweening regard to self, neglects to add whatever degree of influence he may possess to any undertaking of his neighbour, the tendency of which is to promote the glory of God and the advantage of his fellow-creatures, he must consider himself accountable for all the good that he may have thus prevented: and it is scarcely credible how much injury is in this way done in society by well-meaning persons, and that through a spirit of selfishness or of party, of which the individual principally concerned is perhaps by no means aware; so true is it, that *The heart is deceitful above all things*. How wantonly often in common discourse do we cast our own individual influence into the scale which weighs against the projected benevolent designs of some friend or brother in Christ! thereby subjecting ourselves to a responsibility which we are not able to bear. For if I prevent my brother's usefulness in the least degree, I am bound to make up every tittle of that loss to my fellow-men; and the more important the point in which I have thus wantonly interfered, the more serious is my weight of responsibility.—But to return to my story.

It was not long before Belinda, who had all along regarded Laura as a kind of rival, or, at least, as one who chose to assert her own independence, discovered this

flaw in Laura's charity, and therefore took occasion to represent to her the error into which she had fallen; for Belinda was very keen-sighted and accurate in discerning the faults of others, though, in common with many, she was very blind to her own. "My dear Laura," she said, "you do a great deal of good, and are very kind, I know, and so forth, and the poor people in your wood are very much obliged to you. But we have nothing for which to thank you; for you take no pleasure in any of our plans and pursuits, and, indeed, by your grave and reserved manner, you throw cold water on all that we are doing."

This was very true, and Laura felt the rebuke to be just. She withdrew to her own apartment, and meditated upon it. For a time, her mind rose against conviction; and she buoyed herself up with the idea, that, though she was not discussing and planning acts of charity with her companions, she was, nevertheless, much better employed, and that she herself, singly, and without help, had done more than the whole body of them together had accomplished. But it pleased God, by the power of his Holy Spirit, after a while, to cast down these high thoughts, and to quicken her to a just sense of her fault; and now she clearly perceived that a degree of pride and self-complacency had insinuated themselves into her works of charity, and threatened presently utterly to destroy them.

On making this discovery, she, first, humbled herself before her God, and, next, went to seek Belinda, to whom she, at once, candidly acknowledged her error, and besought her forgiveness, promising, that, by the divine help, she would endeavour to reform her conduct in the point on which she had failed.

Belinda, who possessed a considerable degree of generosity of disposition, was touched by this expression of humility in Laura; and from that time a better understanding grew between these young ladies, although there still continued to be a material difference in their characters.

Laura thenceforward deemed it necessary to put a constraint upon herself, and to give more time to the society of her young companions, and to enter with a more lively interest into their works of benevolence; and though

there was much in what they did which vexed and fatigued her, yet she considered it a duty to bear with them, not only with patience, but with apparent pleasure, and she was thus enabled sometimes to influence their discussions to the advancement of the glory of God.

In order to spare time for her companions without abridging the hours usually devoted to her baby, and to other poor people, Laura was obliged to encroach on those periods which she had previously set apart for her own private amusement and improvement; and hence she was compelled to the observance of a continual course of self-denial, which, by the divine help, added to the strength and graciousness of her character.

In this way four years rolled along, without any considerable change having taken place in the affairs of the family at the hall, excepting that, from the time when Laura had changed her reserved and retiring habits for a more courteous and accommodating course of conduct, she had become increasingly loved in the society, and had acquired a gentle and persuasive influence, by which she had been enabled to do much good among the sisterhood.

But here I think it necessary to make some remarks on the term “accommodating,” lest my youthful readers should mistake me, and suppose that I am giving countenance to the pernicious idea, that it is requisite, in order to do good, to be conformed to the world: which idea is directly contrary to the instruction of the apostle, who saith—*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.* (Rom. xiii. 1, 2.)

We must, therefore, as Christians, be especially careful not to accommodate ourselves, in the least degree, to the sinful fashions of the world, and we are, as such, doubtless, required to make a much more entire renunciation of its pomps and vanities than most of us are inclined to admit. But there are certain points which rather affect the whims, tastes, and peculiar feelings of

our neighbour, than either his religion or morals, in which a Christian ought to exercise a considerable degree of forbearance and courtesy. But, owing to the pride and depravity of our nature, these are the points on which men, for the most part, contend with the strongest vehemence; and that for this reason, that the whims and humours of our neighbours are more apt to interfere and clash with our own, in our common intercourse with them, than are those qualities on which may hereafter depend either their everlasting joy or misery.

Having thus, I trust, sufficiently guarded the word “accommodating” from being wrested to an injurious purpose, I proceed.

At the end of the time above mentioned, the brother of Belinda, whom we shall call Eusebius, a young man of respectable character and fortune, came to see his sister, and to spend a few days with her. He was much pleased with Laura, and, after a suitable time, he made proposals of marriage to her.

It is difficult for a young woman to form a correct idea of the man who is paying his addresses to her. The time of courtship is a period during which the minds of both parties are under strong influence, and therefore a man may then seem to be what he is not, without actually intending to play the hypocrite. Hence appears both the wisdom and the safety of our referring the subject of marriage to the Lord, and, in fact, of our entirely committing this concern especially into the hands of Him by whom the thoughts of all hearts are *understood even afar off.*

In this respect, Laura was not wanting in this important duty. She prayed that she might be directed, and she was led to accept Eusebius, who was a character which, upon the whole, promised happiness in such a union with him, though he had by no means those clear and exalted views with which Laura was blessed.

When Laura was first deliberating about taking the widow's infant under her charge, she had, as I have already intimated, a short conflict in her mind concerning a young clergyman in the house where she had spent some months during the foregoing summer.—By her appropriating the money which she had usually allotted to her journeys to the use of the child, she had appa-

rently precluded every chance of seeing this young man again; and though she had continued for several months to remember him from time to time with some partiality, yet she had struggled against the feeling, and had also been led to see the kindness of Providence in having induced her so to do; for, before many months had elapsed, she received a letter from his sister, informing her that he was likely to enter speedily into the marriage state with a young lady to whom he had been attached for some years.

In this instance, Laura was thus made to feel the kindness and wisdom by which the Lord had diverted her thoughts and affections from that object, which would have proved only a source of mortification to her, to one in which she had hitherto tasted nothing but pure delight.

And here, if my reader is not already wearied with my digressions, let me proceed to point out the superior state of that young person whose affections are not engaged by self and self-gratification, to one whose object is self in any degree or under any modification. With what freedom does the one walk through all the numerous and varying scenes of life! with what dignity and ease of manner and carriage, compared to the other! and, finally, to what a variety of afflictions and mortifications is that young person exposed whose feelings are centered in self, in comparison with the individual who, forgetting self, seeks to serve her God with all her heart, and to love her neighbour as herself!

But this blessed state of mind can in no degree be attained but by those who seek deliverance from the bondage of their selfish feelings in the help and power of the Lord; according to the language of the Prophet Isaiah: *Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.* (Isaiah xl. 28, 29.)

Laura had, therefore, long ceased to think of the gentleman above alluded to, and she was, in consequence, at liberty to consider the merits of Eusebius; but before she accepted his hand, she made a point of informing

him of the charge that she had undertaken in the care of little Sally, and she also gently hinted, that she had determined to enter into no engagement whatever, unless she might be permitted to continue her protection of this poor orphan.

Eusebius was too much attached to Laura to deem this a consideration of any difficulty, and he therefore answered, in a lover-like manner, that her will would be a law to him for life, and that her pleasure would ever be his delight.

This, however, did not quite satisfy Laura, who possessed a sober mind, which looked to actions rather than to words, and she, therefore, insisted upon entering into particulars. "This infant," she said, "has hitherto cost me about fifteen pounds a year; and I should be sorry to place myself in any situation in which I could not continue to do as much for her as I have hitherto done. May I then trust that you will hereafter allow so much of my property to be devoted to this purpose?"

"Yes," replied Eusebius, "and, did you require it, twice and thrice as much."

"I hope," replied Laura, "that my moderation will prevent your ever having reason to repent of this indulgence."

Laura now being made easy on this head, and hoping that she should even be better able to serve the child effectually in a house of her own than if she continued single, accepted the proposal of Eusebius, and was married, and taken to his house, which was an agreeable and commodious habitation, situated about half a mile from a small market town, and standing in a pleasant garden.

Before she went from the hall, Laura gave a large Bible, and a liberal present in money, to each of the poor families in the forest. She also handsomely rewarded little Sally's nurse, and promised to make her an annual present, and she took little Sally with her in the carriage which conveyed her from the church.

It was settled that Belinda should make her brother a long visit on his marriage; an arrangement with which Laura would gladly have dispensed, as Belinda was of an overbearing spirit, and her profession was destitute of that simplicity which Laura considered as essential to the Christian character. Laura, however, had learned from no man, for she had no human teacher, but by the

Holy Spirit himself she had been taught to consider herself as little as possible in every arrangement; she therefore did not oppose the intended long visit, which ended in the final establishment of Belinda in her brother's house, and she took scarcely any notice of any little disagreeables which might proceed from the overbearing manner of Belinda, so long as her interference did not obstruct the interests of religion.

Laura made her instruction and management of Sally a matter of much prayer and reflection; she considered, that if she altogether left her with the servants, she would be liable to be ill used, and perhaps to learn much that was amiss. She therefore intrusted her to the care of one particular servant, and allotted her a little play-room, where she placed her bed, and a few shelves well stored with playthings; and she herself devoted to her all the time that she could spare when her husband was otherwise engaged. Thus she would often leave Belinda's side to go up to Sally's closet, and spend hours with her, teaching her, and dressing her doll, and telling her Scripture stories.

Sally was like all other children: she had the same feelings, arising from the same natural depravity. She fixed her affections on Laura in the same manner that she would have done on her own mother: she would run to meet her, jump on her lap, throw her arms round her neck, and lean her whole weight upon her; she would also have her fits of naughtiness, passion, sulking, untidiness, and greediness. All these things Laura had been prepared to expect; and she considered that it was her business, as the adopted mother of this infant, to direct and regulate, as much as she could, her affections and habits, and to lead her to God. But her own regard for the child, she considered, was not to be habitually influenced by its infantine faults, any more than the love of Christ for his people suffers variation from their wayward and inconstant frames. He is, therefore, truly styled, *Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever;* (Heb. xiii. 8.) and they among the children of men who most nearly approach towards the heavenly pattern are the least liable to be influenced and to vary according to events and external circumstances.

Laura, having once obtained the leave of Eusebius for

the admission of little Sally into the family, never troubled him any further with her concerns, and every thing relative to the child passed on smoothly for some months. If Sally appeared before Eusebius, it was on proper occasions, and when she was neatly dressed, and directed how to behave. He was never teased with any little private difficulties concerning her; and Laura would often take occasion to thank him for the protection that he afforded the child, and for the kindness that he extended towards her. Thus all went on well, till Belinda, whose natural and indulged love of self occasioned that restlessness which selfishness always produces, began to pry into the management of little Sally; and, seeing Laura one day look pale, after having corrected the child for some misdemeanor, she began to admonish her sister-in-law on the subject. "My dear Laura," she said, "you devote too much of your time to that child; and I do not think that the behaviour of the child towards you is that which you have a right to expect: she is your inferior, and she therefore has no right to take those liberties with you of sitting on your lap, and putting her arms round your neck, which might be permitted in an equal. Yet this, I grant, might be borne, being only an excess of laudable feelings; but what can be said in extenuation of her fits of naughtiness and obstinacy? what return is this to you for all your kindness? What would have been her situation had you not taken pity on her? —what but a workhouse, or perhaps an early grave?"

Here Laura interrupted her sister, saying, "And pray, my dear Belinda, how would it be possible to make a child of little more than four years of age comprehend what she owes to me? Were she four times four, she could have but a very inadequate idea of these obligations; and perhaps she must wait, not only till she is a mother herself, but till she has opened her eyes upon a state of disembodied existence, before she can form an idea of what she owes to her heavenly Father, who has made use of me as a humble instrument to rescue her from the vice and misery of a workhouse; and I shall think nothing of it, even though she might never thank me till that time."

"Upon my word," said Belinda, "your views, my dear sister, are very singular."

"And wherefore?" asked Laura. "Let us judge only from what we see among children with respect to their natural parents; and then point out to me, if you can, any young people who are properly sensible of the duty and gratitude that they owe to those who gave them birth. And, to go a step higher, who of us has a proper sense of our duty to God, and of the gratitude which we owe to him?"

Belinda seemed to be staggered, for a moment, by this reasoning, and to have nothing to say. But presently she recovered herself, and added, "My dear Laura, your arguments do not bear precisely upon the subject in question, because they refer to the relative duties between parents and children; and I grant that mutual forbearance must be exercised in these relations. But, because parents must put up with their children's faults and infirmities, does it ensue, that you are to endure, in the same degree, the defects and perverseness of a little child whom you have taken in for pure charity? Think to what self-denial you have subjected yourself, in order to support this babe in ease and comfort for several years past, and how you still devote all your leisure time to this same object; and is it reasonable that you should continue so to do, without your having even the reward of seeing gratitude and a desire to please you in the object of all your care? It was but half an hour ago that I heard the child cry out with passion, because you compelled her to perform some little task."

"And you also saw me," replied Laura, "administering the rod to her, which presently put all to rights; and what, my dear sister, is remarkable in all this transaction? Should it please God to give me children of my own, I shall expect sometimes to have scenes of this kind to encounter again."

"But such obstinacy," said Belinda, "from an orphan, a child reared by charity; and such ingratitude towards the kind friend who has been more than a mother!"

"I repeat, my dear sister," said Laura, "that this child is utterly incapable of understanding what she owes me. And do we not know, that every child of Adam is born under the dominion of Satan, and must be expected, till grace has advanced its work, even to break out into strong irruptions of sin?"

Belinda still continued to assert that there was in Sally an unwarrantable degree of what was very wrong; and Laura, as soon as possible, made her escape from the debate into her own room, where a gentle flood of tears relieved her heart from its oppression.

As Laura aimed to avoid, as much as possible, all occasion of dispute with respect to Sally, and as, when her little ward required correction, she administered it as privately as she could, after the contest above mentioned, every thing concerning the child passed on very quietly, till the prospect presented itself that Laura would eventually become a mother herself. The hope was a pleasing one to all the family, and Laura took great delight in preparing for the little stranger.

She was one day thus employed when little Sally was playing by her side; and the child, seeing a small garment, and not knowing for whom it could be intended, very naturally asked if it were for herself.

"No, my dear," said Laura; "it is for a baby whom you are to love when it comes."

"Was not I a baby, Ma'am, when you took me first?" said Sally.

"Yes," said Laura, "a very little baby."

"And did you love me then, Ma'am?" asked the little girl.

"Very, very much," said Laura.

"And will you love me when the other baby comes?"

"Yes, my dear child," replied Laura: "why do you ask?"

"Because," replied Sally, "I heard somebody say, that when you have another baby you will not love me."

"Those were very wicked words," returned Laura, taking the child in her lap. "I always shall love you, my little Sally, as I have loved you from the time that you were first put into my arms."

The little child put her arms round Laura's neck, and kissed her, and then, being perfectly satisfied, went to play.

But Laura could not so easily forget this circumstance. "I see," she said to herself, "what the world expects of me: when I have a child of my own, it is concluded that I shall cease to love this orphan. And why is such an expectation entertained? Because such conduct is

in unison with the general experience of the depraved nature of man. Should not this be a warning to me to watch against my own weakness? and should it not lead me to prayer, that I may be strengthened to resist this temptation, and that I may be enabled, amidst all circumstances, to persevere in this work which I have undertaken?"

Laura then reflected on the various instances which had fallen under her own observation, of persons, who, having undertaken works of charity, and having gone on for a time with great warmth and zeal, had afterwards gradually grown weary in well-doing, and had apparently found reason to prove that it was become their duty now to desist from their good works. She, however, prayed that she might be endued with that charity which sufferereth long and is kind; (1 Cor. xiii. 4;) and it will eventually appear that her prayer was heard.

Soon after this conversation, Belinda again proceeded to busy herself with the affairs of Sally, and that in the presence of her brother, a circumstance which much surprised Laura. This latter young lady endeavoured, however, to be upon her guard, and to answer calmly, though she was much vexed.

"It is a pity, my dear sister," said Belinda, "in your present state of health, that you should fatigue yourself so much with Sally as you do. You look pale; and I really think that it is owing to your confining yourself for so many hours every day in that little hole which Sally occupies."

Eusebius immediately took up his sister's words with evident alarm, and added, "Laura, my dear, I must insist upon it that you do not sacrifice your health to that child: she would do very well under the care of the housemaid."

"I promise you, my love," replied Laura, "that I will do no more for Sally than is quite agreeable and easy to me. So do not in the least disturb yourself on that head."

"You are fond of the child," rejoined Belinda, "and therefore do not know how much you are engaged with her every day, my dear sister."

Eusebius repeated his injunctions, that Laura should not fatigue herself; and there the matter rested for the present.

But Belinda again introduced the subject in the course of a few days, and again shortly after, till, in fact, she had excited a kind of soreness on the point in the mind of her brother; insomuch so, that when by chance he heard Sally's voice, whether in play or otherwise, he would utter some exclamation of displeasure, or send some angry message, desiring that the child might be kept out of his hearing, and this in the presence of Laura, who feared to interfere, lest it should make things still worse.

Now Belinda, after all, was not, upon the whole, an unfeeling woman. She entertained no dislike against the child, and she cherished a general wish to do good and to be pious. But she was selfish: she regarded her own reputation rather than the glory of God; and she could not enter with cordiality and pleasure into any good work in which she had not a conspicuous part. She was not properly sensible of the finite nature of the capacity of man, and, consequently, not aware how little his mind is able to grasp at once, and she fancied that she could do every thing better than it was done by others. She was, therefore, constantly meddling with the concerns of those about her; and it is inconceivable what mischief is done by persons of this character.

When we are required to assist, in a subordinate way, in the promotion of the objects and undertakings of others, it is a very difficult attainment for us readily thus to co-operate, and it requires as much wisdom, and more self-denial, to forward the good works of others, than to originate and to apply plans for the beginning of doing good.

There are some children of a particularly quiet and manageable disposition, children that, when they are put into a room to play, will continue there from morning till night without being heard. But this was not Sally's character: she was a busy, enterprising little creature, constantly trying experiments, and as regularly doing mischief.

Many a time, since her marriage, had Laura concealed the little unlucky accidents which Sally had met with; and though she privately corrected her for her misdemeanors, she was careful in having them repaired unknown to any one. But when Laura was confined, many of these little misfortunes were brought to light; and

Laura, more than once after the birth of her baby, was affected even to tears by the cries of Sally, when Belinda was chastising her, and she felt that the utmost noise which Sally could have made in her play, would have disturbed her much less than the cries of distress of the poor orphan.

It is an old saying, that those persons who do not love children have no right to correct them; and Laura now sensibly felt that no one besides herself had a right to correct Sally. She, however, said nothing, but, as soon as she was again able to get about, she established her little Sally in the nursery with the nurse and the baby; and, as she herself spent many hours of each day in the nursery, she had an opportunity of seeing that justice was done to Sally.

It happened that the nurse employed by Laura was a woman of right principles, and correct judgment, and she satisfied her mistress in her conduct with respect to Sally, observing the judicious medium between indulgence and harshness.

It is not my present business to give a particular account of Laura's family management. Suffice it to say, that she was a good mother, and had a numerous family. She devoted much of her time to her children, who were at once her occupation and delight.

Sally, as she advanced in years, had her proper station appointed her in the nursery, where every thing was taught her by which she might be rendered a pious, well-informed, and useful woman, for that line of life in which she might probably be called to move: but while Laura endeavoured to prepare her for a humble state of life, she still treated her with all the affection and tenderness of an own child. Sally told all her little complaints freely and candidly to Laura. When oppressed by grief, she would run and weep in her bosom; and when pleased, she always looked for Laura to share her joys with her. Thus she grew up in the exercise of all those feelings which a child ought to cherish for a mother; and the influence which Laura, consequently, had with her was such as a parent possesses over a daughter.

In the mean time, Sally, by a happy concurrence of circumstances, was protected from the annoyance of Belinda's busy spirit; for Belinda's apartment was distant

from the nursery, which was Sally's habitual scene of action; and Eusebius seemed to have forgotten that such a person as Sally existed, excepting when he occasionally saw her; and this his apparent indifference about her arose not from any unkindness, but because his business lay in another line.

Thus the poor orphan at length attained her fifteenth year, at about which time Laura was taken so ill, that it was found necessary for her to leave home, and go to Bath for some months. As she was to be received in the house of a friend, it was impossible for her to take more than one child with her; and that child could not be Sally, because in this friend's house there was no place between the parlour and a kitchen, full perhaps of profligate servants, where this poor child might expect to find an accommodation. Laura was obliged, therefore, to leave this poor orphan, together with her other children, under the care of Belinda, who was to superintend the concerns of her sister-in-law's house during her absence.

The tender mother felt no further uneasiness on account of this separation from her own children than what was natural in her parting for the first time for several months from them. She knew that Belinda loved her little nephews and nieces, and that she would, at the same time that she corrected them, if they did wrong, treat them with all proper consideration, and that, in case of any misdemeanor, she would make every desirable allowance for them. But she dreaded lest Belinda's meddling spirit should be excited to the injury of Sally; for Belinda had, in her own estimation, a variety of notable sentiments and expressions concerning persons of inferior conditions; and though she exerted herself much in actual works of charity, she, nevertheless, was entirely destitute of that spirit which suffereth long.

Laura could find, however, no alternative. She must go, and she must leave Sally, whose tears and sobs, when she bade her farewell, did not a little add to her apprehensions. She did not, however, think it judicious even to hint to Belinda that she had her fears lest she might prove unkind to Sally; for, well knowing Belinda's high and independent spirit, she was apprehensive that such a hint might only excite in her a feeling still more unpropitious to the welfare of the orphan.

Thus Sally was left, and she soon felt the want of that solicitude which had hitherto preserved her, with all the tenderness of maternal love, from those rubs which unprotected youth must ever experience in the world at large.

Sally felt, from a kind of never-failing instinct, that the sentiments of Belinda towards her were very different from those of her dear dear mamma, as she always called Laura, when she dared, abridging the last letter on occasions when she thought that the less familiar term of Ma'am would be better received. She spent the first two days of Laura's absence in her little closet, in which her bed had stood from the time of her having first become an inmate in the house, creeping out only to get her meals at those times when she thought that she should be least observed. But, soon growing weary of this secluded life, and feeling the weight of three shillings, which Laura, on the eve of her departure, had put into her hand, an intolerable burden, she planned an excursion to the neighbouring town, in order to relieve herself of them, and silencing her conscience, which was not altogether easy on the occasion, by saying, "If my dear mamma was here, I am sure she would let me go, because once she did send me alone to the town," she put on the very best clothes that she had, and sallied forth in triumph. She reached the town in safety, and laid out half of her money in rose coloured ribands, and the other in playthings for the children. She was returning, delighted with what she had done, and had got nearly half way home when she met Belinda.

She was at that moment just thinking how happy the children would be as they received the playthings, when her joy met with a sudden check at the sight of Belinda.

She reddened violently, and, had it been in her power, would have run another way to hide herself, but this was impossible.

"And is that you, Sally?" said Belinda, "walking out at this distance from home and alone? And pray, whose permission did you ask?"

Sally was silent.

"You have been at the town?" said Belinda.

"Yes, Ma'am," replied the orphan.

"And pray, of whom did you ask leave?"

"I thought that my dear Ma'am would not have been angry if she had been here."

"But she is not here, and it is to me that you are now to apply," rejoined Belinda. "Return home immediately, and be assured, that if you are ever again guilty of a thing of this kind, I will make you sensible that you are not to take the liberties with me that you do with my sister. You trespass on her kindness, Sally, and always have done, and you never have had a proper sense of her goodness to you."

"Indeed, indeed," said Sally, bursting into tears, "I do love her, and I think that I could die to please her; and I know that I never shall be happy till I see her again."

This last expression offended Belinda, and she said, "Why should you suppose that you will not be happy while under my care, unless you are determined to go on as you have begun, in endeavouring to do every thing which you can think of to displease me?" Belinda then bade Sally instantly return home, while she slowly followed, planning sundry reformations in the management of the orphan, to be entered upon, immediately.

While pondering these plans abounding with circumstances destructive to the comfort of Sally, Belinda met her brother, and without loss of time set before him an aggravated account of Sally's delinquency. She might have added, that she herself had allowed two whole days to pass since the departure of his wife, without once enquiring where Sally was, or how she was employed; and that the misdemeanor of the young creature might justly be attributed to her not having properly assumed the reins of her authority over her; but she withheld this important part of the story, and thus she made Sally's conduct appear to be an act of open rebellion, though it was really no more than a hasty and foolish measure.

There are certain points, on which men in general are usually very tender; they cannot bear to be troubled with the vexatious minutiae of household affairs; nor, in fact, do these belong to their province; and when they happen to be disturbed by these trifles, they often indeed drive away the tormenting flies, but then it is with a blow which, like that of the bear in the fable, leaves the face of the person thus relieved all covered with blood. Eu-

sebius was evidently much displeased with Sally by Belinda's representation of her conduct, and he, therefore, expressed himself strongly against her in sweeping terms, as a young person who had no sense of gratitude and affection.

Sally had many faults; still, want of affection was no trait in her character: on the contrary, her feelings were warm; and for Laura and her children, and even for Eusebius, she cherished a regard which could not have been stronger had she actually been their own child.

The next day Belinda began to execute her scheme of reformation. She had always considered Laura as being too indulgent to Sally, and she therefore thought that she should be actually performing a laudable work by changing the plans of management with respect to her. Her first step, therefore, was to order Sally to take her meals in the kitchen, and to assume a larger share in the discharge of domestic duties. Laura had endeavoured to qualify Sally to get her bread by needle-work, and in many other ways to act as an upper servant; but Belinda insisted upon it that an inferior mode of servitude would be quite as good for her, and, with this view, she took immediate measures to fit her for this new way of life; and thus, by associating her with a style of company to which she was previously a stranger, and by inuring her hands to hard labour, she put her entirely out of the way in which Laura had educated her.

Amidst these altered circumstances, Sally became dissatisfied and restless. She often hurried through the tasks that were allotted to her, and then crept into the nursery to play with her old companions, or rather to weep with her friend the little Laura, who was an amiable child about five years younger than herself. But if fretting and weeping had been the only ill effects of Belinda's injudicious and unfeeling management, it would have been well: but unhappily young people of fifteen do not weep long in any circumstances amidst which pleasure offers itself in however coarse and undesirable a form.

The family establishment consisted of several servants, men as well as women; and though Laura, and even Belinda, endeavoured to select and regulate this family of servants according to the best Christian principles, it would, nevertheless, afford matter for great wonder, if,

in a kitchen containing seven persons, something was not now and then said and done which Laura would much have wished for her dear Sally neither to see nor hear.

Sally had acquired such a nice sense of delicacy, that she was at first shocked with the coarse jokes of the footman, and refused to take any part in them; but her delicacy having nothing to encourage and support it, soon gave way; and she, being a very lively girl, soon learned to joke with the other servants, and perhaps to be the first to throw the dregs of a jug of beer at the maids and then to run screaming away if they attempted to return the joke.

Belinda having now placed Sally in the situation in which she maintained that she ought always to have been brought up, turned her busy mind to other works of benevolence, as she called them, in which, however, it is to be hoped that she evinced the exercise of a better judgment.

We have no opportunity of tracing any other professed good works of Belinda; but if they were not better planned and performed than were her avowed kind intentions towards Sally, it may well be affirmed with respect to her nearly as it is said of the wicked, “The tender mercies of the selfish and meddling are cruel.” For Belinda, in all that she did, aimed to make it appear that she was wiser and cleverer than other people, and in seeking to exalt herself she failed to consider the feelings of others, the consequences of which indifference were that she not unfrequently broke the bruised reed, and extinguished the smoking flax.—But to return to poor Sally.

Eusebius was more than once roused from the perusal of an interesting book while sitting in a retired parlour at the back of the house, by loud peals of laughter proceeding from the offices, which laughter was always traced to poor Sally, neither was she wronged when accused of beginning and leading the uproar which had disturbed the master. Belinda on these occasions always aggravated Sally’s offences, and added to the general irritation by sharp and severe reproofs to the unhappy girl herself in the presence of the other servants.

And now poor Sally frequently consumed her time in weeping in private for her beloved mamma, as she fondly

called Laura in her moments of tender sorrow, in making resolutions of amendment and reformation, and in scenes of hard labour and idle mirth. She wondered why she could not abide by her determinations of behaving well as formerly; and she could not conceive how it was that religion had not the same influence over her that it once had; while she often summed up all her reasonings on this strange alteration in herself by saying, "When my dear, dear mamma was at home, things were not as they now are."

As it might well be expected, the conduct of Sally lowered her more and more in the estimation of her protectors, if the heads of the family who were at home now deserved that name; and the unpromising state of the poor young creature at length became so evident to Belinda, who thought of nothing less than taking any blame to herself on the occasion, that she proposed to Eusebius that Sally should be sent from the house, and placed to lodge with a woman in the neighbourhood who took in washing and ironing, "and there," said Belinda, "this young person will be in her proper place; and we may hope," added she, in a voice of compassion, "we may hope that she will then do better."

Eusebius rather started, however, at this proposal, on account of Laura, for he knew full well her affection for the girl, neither was he himself wholly without regard for her, and he was sensible how much his own children were attached to her: he therefore resisted the proposed measure for a while, but at length, on his seeing that Sally would infallibly be ruined if she continued where she was, he consented that she should be removed; although he expressed strong apprehension that his dear Laura would suffer much when she heard of the necessity that there was for such a removal; he also acknowledged himself greatly surprised at the sudden depravity of the young creature, and asked Belinda how it was possible to account for it. To which Belinda replied, that she had no doubt that her sister, out of false tenderness, had hitherto kept the faults of the poor girl from their knowledge; for on no other supposition could she account for her suddenly appearing to have deviated so very far from the course of rectitude. Whether Belinda was herself conscious that she had erred in the management of

this poor young girl, we know not, for she was strongly actuated by that self-love which blinds the eyes and hardens the heart: but this is certain, that she invariably had spoken but little to Eusebius of the various changes which she herself had made in the situation and employment of Sally; and she represented her as having herself forsaken the nursery and preferred the society of the kitchen.

When Sally was told that it was settled for her to leave the house of her hitherto kind protectors, the information seemed to rouse every feeling that was tender and amiable in her nature.

"Oh my mother! my adopted mother! my dear, dear Ma'am!" she exclaimed, "when will you come back? I have behaved ill, but I know you will forgive me—you will be sorry for me, and you will take me to your dear heart again."

This exclamation was uttered in the presence of Belinda, who represented to her, that, after her very bad behaviour, she must not expect the return of Laura's kindness.

Sally looked at her with an expression of countenance, which seemed to say that she was assured that nothing on earth could finally separate her kind protectress from her poor child, and the look was one which Belinda understood, for she reproved her sharply, and asked her, if she could deny her having behaved very ill during the absence of her mistress.

"I have behaved very ill, it is true, Ma'am," said Sally, "I never behaved so ill before; I do not know how it has happened: my heart I know is very bad, and I hope I shall behave better where I am going; I will try, and then, perhaps, I shall be forgiven and brought back to my dear, dear home, and to the dear children." She then broke out afresh into tears, and begged to be permitted to kiss the children. But Eusebius had gone out with the children, in order, no doubt, that he might be out of the way on this painful occasion; and poor Sally was obliged to walk away carrying a bundle of some of her favourite possessions from that house, which had long afforded her so happy a shelter, to become, a second time, the inhabitant of a cottage.

The Lord is jealous for the widow and the orphan, and
D D 3

He often overrules for their good those events which are planned by the enemy for their destruction.

Thus it proved with respect to Sally; for in the retirement of the cottage she recovered in a short time her former composed state of mind. The good lessons of piety which Laura had habitually given to her, began again to resume their wonted influence; and though she grew coarse and comparatively negligent in her person and external appearance, her affliction was, nevertheless, producing a good work within her, and she was become far more sensible than she had ever previously been of all the numberless advantages which she owed to her more than mother.

Thus three quarters of a year were elapsed since Laura had left her home, and the time for her returning thither now approached. Her health, which had been fervently prayed for many times by the afflicted Sally, as well as by several others, was restored to her, and the day for her return was at length fixed. The meeting between Laura and her affectionate husband, was as tender as might be expected. Eusebius went to meet her some miles on the road, and all the happy children, with Bellinda, were waiting to run into her arms as she stepped out of the carriage—Laura wept, and smiled, and wept again. But many minutes had not passed before she asked for Sally, and an evasive answer being given, (for nothing had been mentioned to her by letter of the affairs of the poor orphan,) her attention was diverted for a time to some other darling object newly restored to her sight. Sally, however, was too near the heart of Laura, for her to continue much longer without repeating her enquiry after her, which she did to her little daughter, bidding her, in a whisper, call her dear Sally to her; but then considering that the parlour might, perhaps, have been interdicted to the orphan, she took the little Laura's hand, and said softly, “We will now go, my dear, and find our dear Sally.”

The young Laura went out with her mamma, and had reached the nursery in company with her before she dared to utter a word, at length bursting into tears, she said, “Dear mamma, poor Sally does not live in the house now.”

Laura, truly astonished, now recollects that for some

months past even the name of Sally had not been mentioned in any letter, a circumstance which she had hitherto attributed to forgetfulness, and she now eagerly enquired of her little daughter, the reason why she had been removed.

The little Laura explained the matter to her mamma as well as she could : but it was doubtful from her statement, whether she thought that Sally had deserved to be sent away or not; for she gave such a confused account of her being among the servants, sometimes saying that it was by her aunt's orders, and sometimes laying the blame on Sally herself, that her mamma was by no means satisfied with what she had told her, and she was altogether so shocked by the circumstance, that she burst into a violent flood of tears, and was found weeping when Belinda came to call her to tea.

It was Laura's desire, on all occasions, to act from reason and principle rather than feeling; therefore, although she was thoroughly distressed at what she had just heard respecting poor Sally, and although she had reason to suspect some grievous mismanagement on the part of Belinda, yet when called to join her assembled family at tea, she wiped away her tears, and endeavoured to appear cheerful. Notwithstanding her efforts, a cloud of sorrow, however, rested on her brow, and as she caressed her youngest child, who sat on her lap, she thought much of Sally, and recollectcd many little circumstances of her infancy, which now filled her mind with emotions of bitter anguish.

She, however, preserved her self-possession till after tea, and till the children had retired to bed, when her husband tenderly taking her hand, on observing a tear start in her eye, requested her to explain the cause of a sorrow which was too evident, and which seemed, as he said, extraordinary, on an occasion so joyful as that of the restoration of a wife and mother to her husband and children.

Laura could now restrain herself no longer, and said, "I am grieved to interrupt the joy of my friends, by my impertinent sorrow, but I must confess that the sad news which I have just heard of my poor Sally has greatly afflicted me."

Eusebius, who was not at all conscious of any inten-

tional unkindness to Sally, entered into an explanation of the whole affair, as he had himself seen it, and heard it represented by his sister, in a manner so cool and dispassionate, that Laura knew not what to think, or whom to blame, though she still felt almost convinced that had she continued at home, nothing of this would have happened. She prayed, however, that she might be preserved from yielding in any measure either to angry passion or unreasonable feeling, and that she might be directed to act as a friend of the fatherless, and as a peace-maker to all parties.

When Laura awoke in the morning, which was not till rather later than usual, she found her two little daughters watching by her bed-side, and when they had kissed her, and expressed anew their joy at her return, they put into her hands a small soiled and ill-spelled note from Sally. "It is from Sally, mamma," they said, "our own poor Sally, and she gave it to us at the garden-gate this morning, and nobody saw us."

"Nobody saw you, my children!" said Laura, "and have you learned to do things slyly? Remember that you used to tell me every thing that you did."

"And so we shall again, mamma," said the little girls, "and we have begun to do it; but our aunt would have been so angry if she had seen us with Sally!"

"Well, well," said Laura, "I hope that all will be set right now, and though our poor Sally has been naughty, I trust that you still love her and pray for her."

"Indeed we do," said the little girls, "and little Arthur, whom our poor Sally used to love so much, he even prays for her every day; and you cannot think how he cried when she was sent away."

Sally's note, which was written on a blank leaf torn out of some book, was full of joyous expressions for the return of her dear, dear mamma, as in her ecstacy she ventured to call Laura; it also contained many confessions of her faults, but no complaints of any one, and concluded with an earnest request that she might be taken in again.

Laura was much affected, not only by the letter itself, but also by the many indications that it contained of the neglected and desolate state of the child whom she had hitherto preserved with so much tenderness. The paper

on which the note was written was dirty, the hand almost illegible, and the words were ill-spelled. "And is the downward road," thought Laura to herself, "so easy, so very easy? is the labour of years so soon defeated? Oh my Sally! my Sally! better would it have been to have seen thee in thy grave, than to see thee thus cast out! thus abandoned!"

It was in vain that Laura strove to seem cheerful at breakfast, but she at least succeeded in appearing gentle and good-humoured.

After breakfast she examined some old writings, and found a slip of paper on which was written these words: "On such a day, in such year, it was promised me by Mr. E——, &c., that he would permit me, if I became his wife, to adopt as my own, Sarah ———, and afford her every protection and kindness which a daughter might require of a mother." Laura inclosed this paper in an envelope, and sent it by her little daughter to her husband, who spent most of his mornings in his study.

Eusebius was affected by the sight of this memorandum, which had been written in his presence, and signed by himself: it reminded him of the early stage of his connexion with his beloved Laura, and induced him to take a swift review of all those excellencies which had rendered his life, as a married man, more happy than is commonly experienced in the conjugal state.

His first wish was immediately to oblige his dear Laura, and, at all events, to recal Sally. But it must be remembered that his mind was thoroughly poisoned with respect to this young person, whom he believed to be a truly depraved girl; and he felt that, as the father of a family, he should act with a blameable weakness if he allowed his wife again to introduce such a character as an inmate of his house. He thought it, therefore, his duty, to say that Sally must, for the present, continue where she was, or at least in some other suitable situation, apart from his children; he was desirous, however, of signifying to Laura, as tenderly as possible, his opposition to her wishes. He, therefore, instead of returning a written answer to her note, himself went into her dressing-room, and, accosting her with the utmost tenderness, he expressed the pain which he felt in refusing her any thing that she could desire, but he, nevertheless, declared,

that such had been the depravity of Sally's conduct, that he must still continue his refusal to admit her into his house as the companion of his children.

Laura heard this decision with grief evidently sincere. She even ventured to advance several arguments. But Eusebius was not to be shaken; and, therefore, all the success that she could meet with was to obtain permission to preside over Sally at a distance.

Laura's mind was so far subjected to the control of Christian principle, that she was enabled patiently to yield to this trial, and she resolved to do so, if possible, without shewing the least resentment towards her sister: for, from her enquiries among the servants and children, she had now become fully convinced that Sally's misfortunes were owing to the indiscreet and unfeeling management of Belinda. While, however, she was considering how, in this affair, she ought to act as a Christian towards her husband and sister, she did not lose sight of her duty to Sally. She addressed to her a tender and affectionate letter, wherein she stated her own willingness to overlook all that was past, and again to receive her to her heart; but she added, that those on whom she depended not having the same regard for her, could not be prevailed upon to pass over her faults, or to re-admit her into the situation which she formerly occupied in the family.

She also represented to her, that she owed this affliction entirely to her own evil conduct, and she failed not to state, that, if she had preserved her prudence, the Lord would then have been on her side, and no one could have injured her. "Had you," she said, "been discreet, my beloved Sally, and not fallen into those disgraceful faults with which every one charges you, I should have been enabled to maintain your cause against the whole world. But you have, by your own folly, at once stopped the mouth and tied the hands of her who loves you with a mother's love, and we must both abide for a while the painful consequences of your conduct."

Laura then proceeded to point out to Sally the important doctrine of man's thorough incapacity and utter weakness to do well, and she failed not to shew her where, in future, she must seek assistance under trials and distresses. She concluded by assuring her that she

should never cease to labour and pray for their reunion, adding, that nothing would so much conduce to it as her good behaviour in the situation which she now occupied.

When Laura sent this letter, she forwarded with it a basket, containing a variety of little presents and comforts, such as, for the most part, only a mother would have thought of; neither did she without tears deliver the basket and letter to the person who was to carry them.

On further enquiry, Laura became increasingly sensible that Sally owed all her afflictions to the pragmatical mismanagement of Belinda, and for a short time this conviction filled her mind with resentment. But Laura was a Christian not only in word, but also in spirit, and she habitually bore in mind the instructions given by our Lord to Peter concerning an offending brother—*Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven.* (Matt. xviii. 21, 22.)

The object of this story is, to shew wherein true charity consists. It does not consist in splendid and momentary acts of heroism, or in any sudden extraordinary exertions in the behalf of a fellow-creature: other motives besides Christian charity may induce persons to works of this kind. As St. Paul saith—*Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.* (1 Cor. xiii. 3.) But true charity consists in an abiding, unostentatious preference of a man's neighbour before himself: neither does such charity consist with that headlong and vehement spirit which leads a man to patronize one individual at the expence of all the rest of the world; but it consists in a careful and tender regard to the various feelings of others, in an earnest solicitude to promote their welfare, especially in a spiritual sense, and in an habitual disposition to make all due allowance for the weakness and infirmities of our neighbours, and that without partiality or respect of persons.

And herein appeared in an especial manner the charity of Laura; for while she was secretly and severely wounded by the injuries which she had suffered in the person of her dear Sally, she endeavoured to make every possible allowance for Belinda, and she never broke out into

murmurs or complaints with respect to her in the presence of her brother, nor did she alter in any degree the sweetness of her carriage towards her, although she took every care to keep her from again exerting the same busy spirit in the family by which she had so greatly injured Sally.

Laura had submitted, indeed, to the pleasure of her husband with respect to her beloved orphan; but her heart still yearned after her eldest child, as she called her, and she continually, yet gently, attempted to restore her to the good opinion of Eusebius: and, as Sally behaved well in her seclusion, Laura found the less difficulty in bringing back his mind to the point at which she aimed.

Thus passed away four months after Laura's return to her home, and she had never yet seen Sally once since, because her husband had carefully made it a point that she should not, although she had allowed scarcely a day to pass without sending her some token of love, or some little memorial by which she might encourage her to persevere in well-doing.

It happened at the close of this period that as Laura was walking one evening with her husband and sister, at an abrupt turn of a narrow lane, she was suddenly met by Sally, who was carrying a basket on her arm, and who presented a certain negligence in her appearance which touched her adopted parent to the heart.

No sooner did these two persons, whose reciprocal affection was so sincere, thus meet, than they ran into each other's arms; and Sally, sinking upon her knees, broke out into such an agony of mingled grief and joy, that the heart of Eusebius was quite melted, and he readily gave Laura permission to receive her adopted child once again under her roof.

Thus did the gentleness and patience of Laura under this trial, triumph over the prejudices of her friends. She thanked her husband for his kindness with tears of joy, and giving Sally a handsome present to carry to the poor woman, who had taken care of her during her banishment, she directed her immediately to return to her home.

I cannot convey even an idea of the joy which diffused itself throughout all Laura's little family when Sally appeared, and was reinstated in all her former privileges,

being restored to her old companions and her little chamber. She seemed to have no desire whatever, to renew her frolics in the kitchen; and this circumstance Laura regarded as an especial token for good: as when a young person has once been led to indulge a relish for improper society, it is much to be feared that she may never again lose the taste for it.

It always remained a matter of doubt in the mind of Laura, whether Belinda was at all conscious of the great mistake of which she had been guilty with respect to Sally; if, however, she was at all sensible of it, still she was by no means humbled by it, for she always cherished the same self-confidence which led her to the commission of this error. She had no idea of putting herself in imagination in the place of another, and of entering into the feelings of that person; and therefore, even when on the whole she was desirous of doing well, she often offended, and always wounded; and actually, as we have clearly seen on one occasion, she often did a great deal of mischief to those persons with whom she interfered.

In every view which she took of life, it might be said of her, that self was the most prominent object, and every other was, in consequence, presented to the eye of her understanding in a false and unfavourable point of view. She valued characters only on account of their particular bearings or relations with respect to herself, and she allowed herself in different modes and principles of calculating with reference to herself and with reference to another.

Those who lived with her, had, in consequence, much to bear, and as whatever was done for her always fell short of the sense which she had of her own deserts, she could, of course, have but few feelings of gratitude.

She was, at the same time, a strong professor of the Christian religion, and she was not without certain good qualities; but, as the foundation of Christianity must lie in deep humility, it cannot be expected that real piety should ever dwell with allowed and habitual pride.

Laura persevered in the same even and lovely course, till the end of a long and comparatively peaceful life. She saw several of her children happily married, and she embraced her children's children on her knees.

Sally, who, from the time when she was brought back to the house of Eusebius, had conducted herself with great propriety, was married, at a suitable age, to a mechanic in the neighbourhood, a pious young man; and Eusebius gratified his beloved Laura by providing the complete furniture of their little dwelling, and adding the present of ten guineas on the wedding-day; which last gift he annually repeated.

When Sally became a mother, and not till then, she fully felt the value of what Laura had done for her, and her consequent lively sense of gratitude induced her ardently to seek the gratification of her adopted parent in every action of her life. Thus the influence of Laura over Sally daily increased, and Laura availed herself of it to lead her more and more closely to her Saviour.

Notwithstanding the difference of their conditions, a sweet and tender friendship also continued to subsist between Laura's children and Sally, and they frequently visited her in her humble little dwelling; and in times of sickness and distress these friends were ever ready mutually to console each other.

Thus Laura set before the world an example of persevering and invariable kindness and benevolence; pursuing one object through a course of many years opposed by various hindrances and obstacles, amidst objects of disgust, in fatigues, and under the frowns and reproofs of friends, and proceeding with unwearied constancy till she had completely effected the point which she had at first in view: while Belinda, who was continually talking on the subject of charity, and professedly forming plans for the good of her neighbours, was enabled to bring little or nothing to maturity, because, whenever her own ease or her credit in the eyes of the world came in competition with the fulfilment of her plans for doing good, she took offence, and desisted from her purpose. But Belinda walked in her own strength, while Laura went on in the strength of the Lord.

Here the lady of the manor closed her manuscript, and, promising the young people her third story on our duty towards our neighbours on the occasion of their next meeting, she called them to prayer with her before they separated.

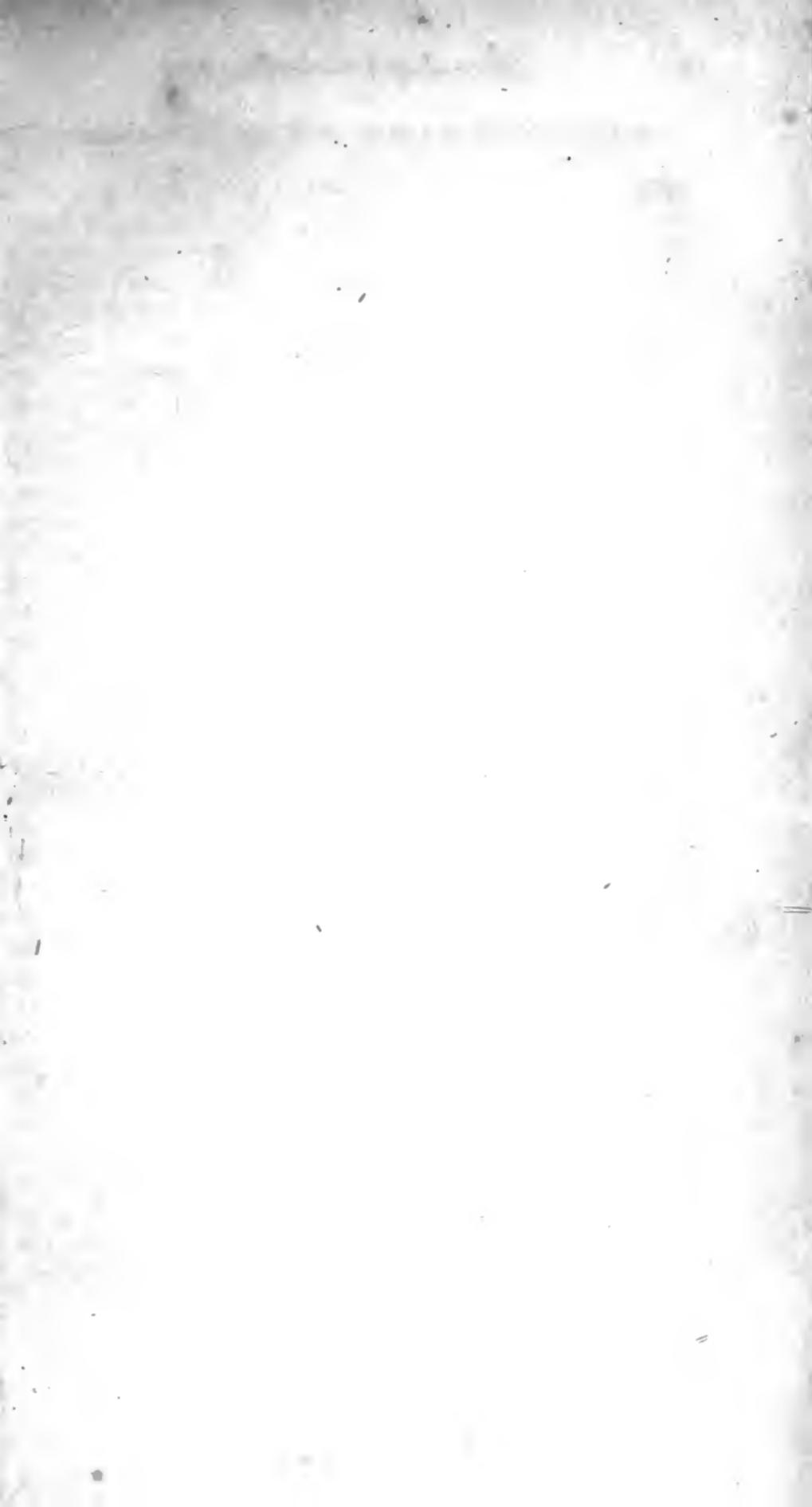
A Prayer for our due Behaviour towards our Inferiors.

“O ALMIGHTY LORD GOD, thou King of kings and Lord of lords, who, nevertheless, for our sakes didst condescend to take upon thee the form of a servant, and, being in the likeness of a man, to endure every infirmity of our nature, though thou wast yet without sin; we humbly beseech thee to endue us with that spirit of charity which suffereth long and is kind, which beareth all things, which endureth all things, which seeketh not her own; that, feeling that the poorest creature is our fellow-creature, we may be enabled to persevere in our course of duty without looking for reward, without yielding to disgust, and without stumbling at reproach. Teach us, while we hate sin, to compassionate the sinner, to pity his helplessness, to administer to his wants, to bear with his ingratitude, to endure his obstinacy, and to love him notwithstanding his loathsomeness.

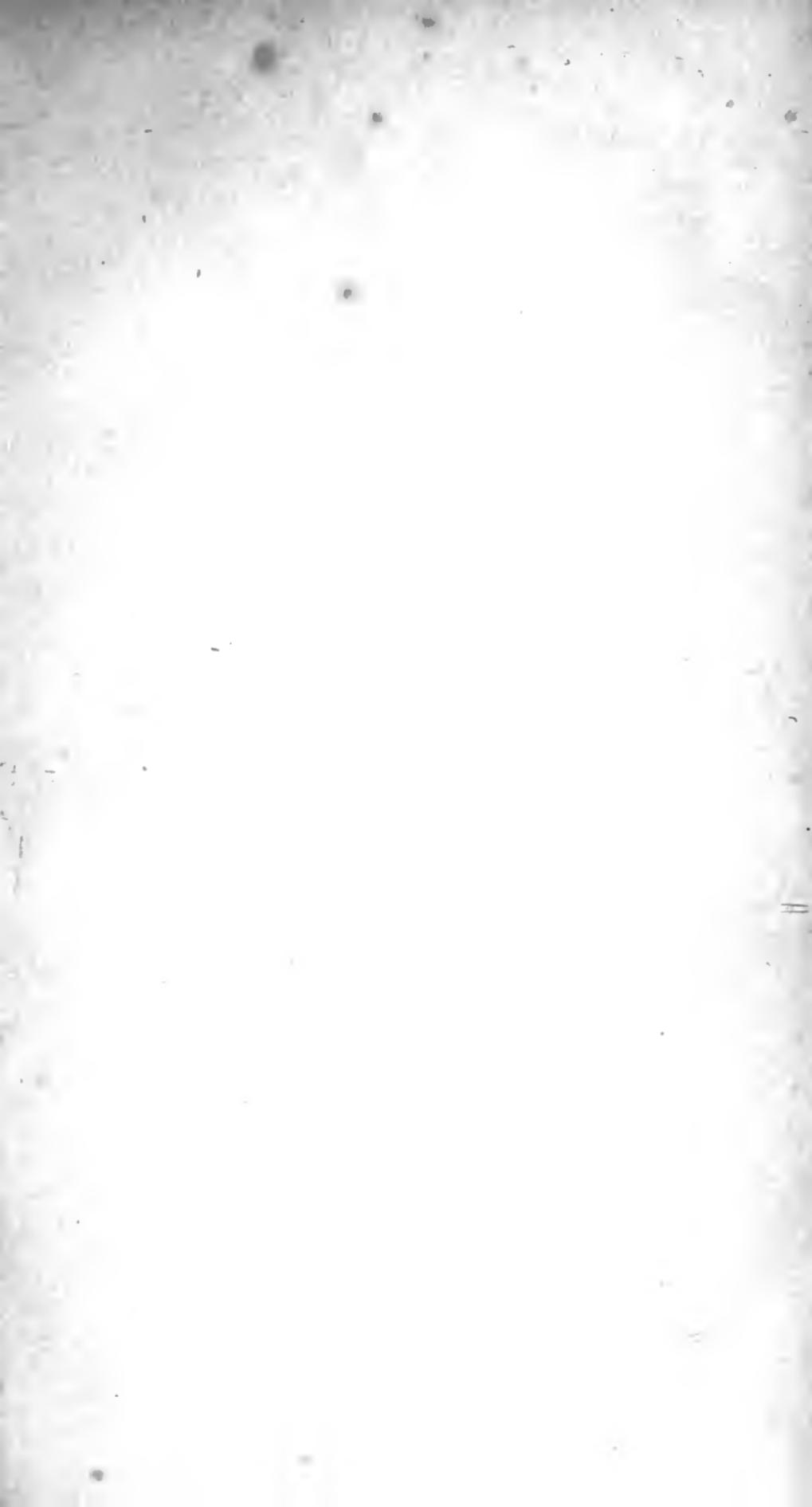
“Grant, O blessed Lord God, that our charity may be sincere and fervent, that it may not seek its reward from men, but be content to await it from God, and that it may not be chilled by circumstances, or by any apparent want of success. And grant, O gracious God, that we may not be ostentatious in our charities, but that we may be carefully observant of our Saviour’s injunction—not to let our left hand know what our right hand doeth; and whenever we may act either in or for any charitable society, may we be preserved from that spirit which too often excites an individual to seek his own glory, to the great injury of the good work in which he may be engaged. Divest us, O God, by thy sanctifying and renewing Spirit, of all self-seeking of every description. May the praise of man be an abomination in our ears; and may our every action be influenced by the desire of promoting the glory of Thee, O God, and of Thyself alone.

“And now to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, be all glory and honour, now and for evermore. Amen.”

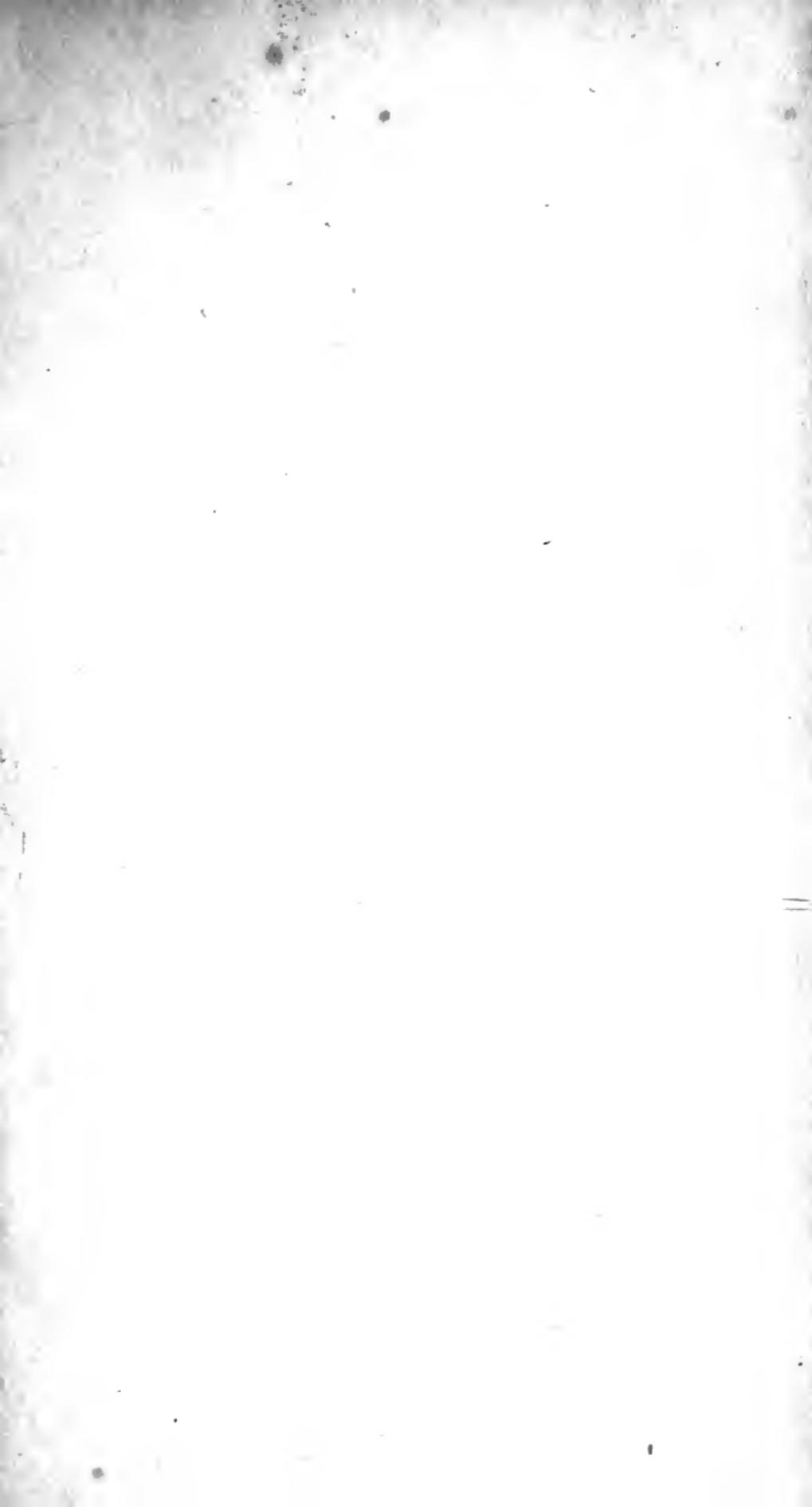


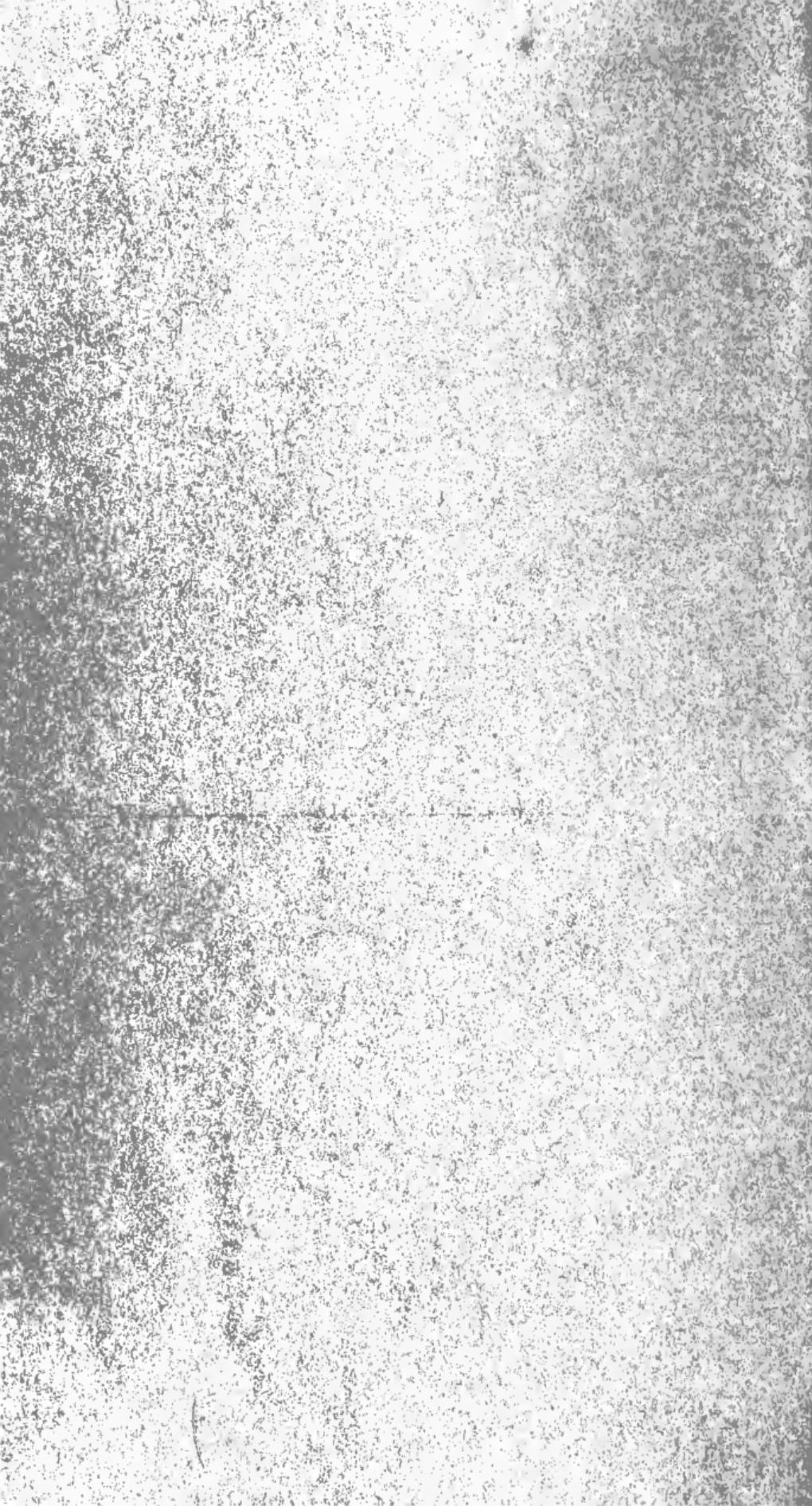














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